Coast Guard

Issue 3 - 2006
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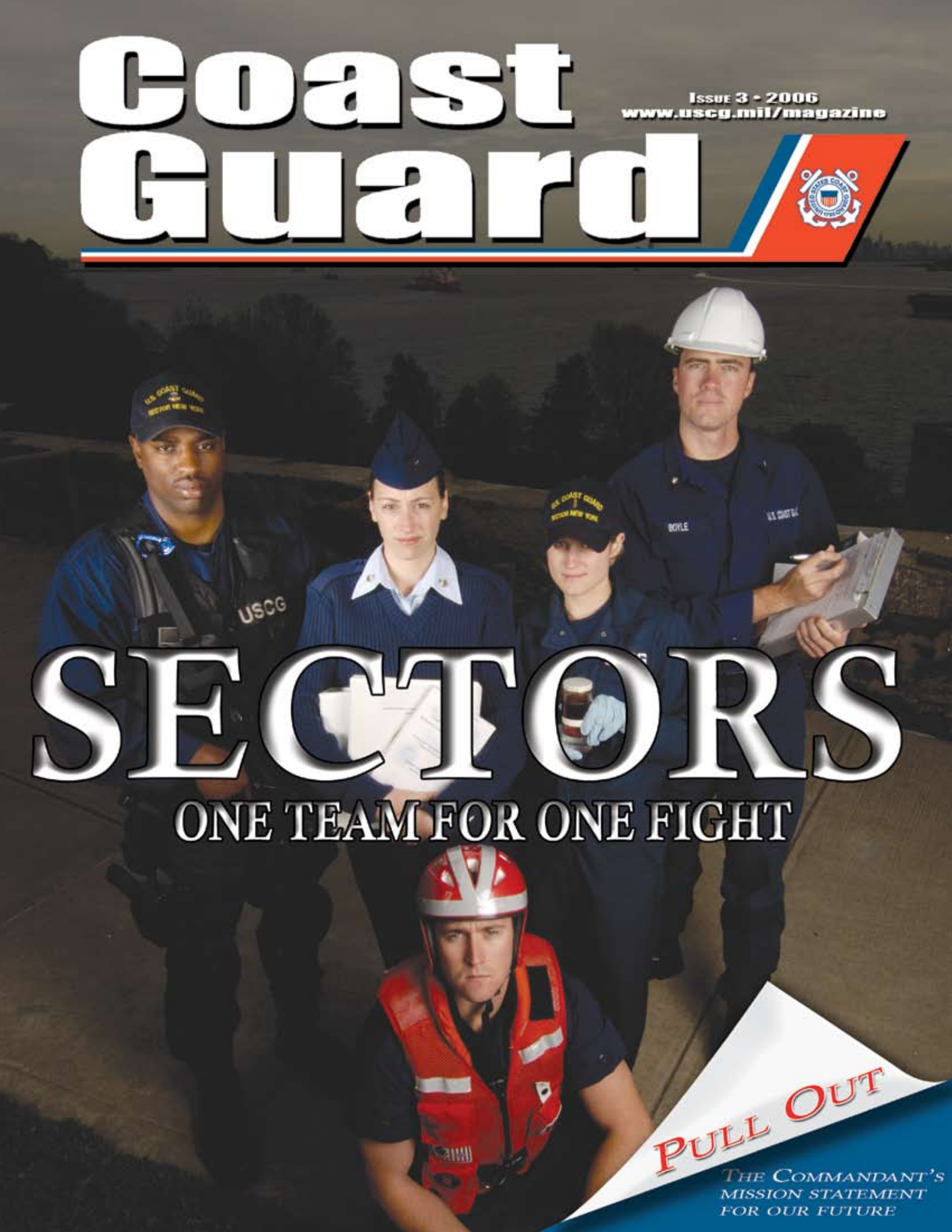

SECTORS

ONE TEAM FOR ONE FIGHT

PULL OUT

THE COMMANDANT'S MISSION STATEMENT FOR OUR FUTURE

Coast Guard

Out of the history books

The Crew of a HH-3F Pelican preforms one of the many surface rescues for which the HH-3F were famous.

HH-3F Pelican

The last Sikorsky HH-3F Pelican helicopter in Coast Guard service was retired May 6, 1994. This ended the Coast Guard's "amphibious era," as no aviation asset left in service was capable of making water landings.

The HH-3F was acquired by the Coast Guard in November 1967 to extend its offshore helicopter coverage to 300 miles. The medium-range, twin-engine amphibian carried a sophisticated rotary wing avionics package, cruised at 120 knots, and was capable of reaching 142 knots. It had a normal crew of pilot, co-pilot, navigator, flight mechanic, and could carry up to 20 passengers.

The HH-3F was well suited for search and rescue, marine environmental protection, logistic and reconnaissance support, enforcement of laws and treaties, defense readiness and drug interdiction. The size of the aircraft, its navigational and communication equipment, and its range made it an efficient and reliable platform in all types of weather and over most terrain. The aircraft could seat 17 passengers and its side hoist could lift 600 pounds.

In October 1980, the HH-3F, the service's medium range helicopter, was the primary rescue vehicle when hundreds of individuals, mostly senior-citizens, were plucked from bobbing lifeboats some 200 miles out in the Gulf of Alaska. This followed a fire on board the cruise ship Prinsendam and was one of the most successful maritime rescues in history. During its career, the fleet of 40 saved 23,169 lives and assisted 65,377 others.

In 1986 the HH-60 Jayhawk was selected to replace the aging HH-3F Pelican as the Coast Guard's medium range helicopter.

Information and photo provided by the Coast Guard Historian, G-IPA-4

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Features

Departments

Homeland Security

On The Cover

BM2 Ben Booth (left), SK2 Keisha Pate, ENS Kristin Conville, MST3 David Boyle and BM3 Ben Foster at the overlook at Fort Wadsworth on Staten Island May 09, 2006.
U.S. Coast Guard photo by Public Affairs Detachment New York

Joint Force, One Fight

CGC Wrangell rendezvous with USS Ronald Reagan (CVN-76) underway in the Persian Gulf, March 8. During the 3-hour encounter Ronald Reagan treated Wrangell to a close-up view of flight operations and provided a CVN-size "care package" to Wrangell crewmembers. The superb hospitality and support provided by the largest NAVCENT combatant to the smallest was welcomed by all.

Navy Photo by PHC Spike Call

Training Days

ET2 Joseph Keough, a company commander for Oscar Company 172, yells commands to his recruits during an early evening visit to the beach for incentive training Oct. 29, 2005.

This photo won first place in the Feature Category of the 2005 Military Photographer of the Year Contest.

Photo by PAC Tom Sperduto, PADET New York

Rescue Thanks

NEW ORLEANS, Apr. 20 —
Tasha Cheramie and Bobbie Mcreau from Nairn, view footage of their rescue with Lt. David M. Johnston and AET2 Warren Labeth of Air Station New Orleans after an awards ceremony honoring the air station personnel here.
Johnston and Labeth were members of the helicopter crew that rescued Cheramie, Mcreau and Cheramie's one-year-old daughter Cassidy — the first rescue performed by the Coast Guard during their response to Hurricane Katrina.

Photo by PA3 Robert M. Reed, 8th Dist.

DRUG WAR AWARD

JACKSONVILLE, Fla., May 4 — Coast Guard Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron recieved a Unit Commendation today for their successes in the war on drugs. To date, HITRON has assisted in stopping more than 269,379 pounds of illegal drugs valued at more than $8.1 billion in import value.

OIL SPILL RESPONSE

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J., Apr. 25 — The Coast Guard, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control are working together to clean up an oil spill that occurred early this morning. The crewman onboard the tug Liberty notified the Coast Guard at 6:45 a.m. that oil was floating in the upper Delaware Bay. Marine science technicians from Sector Delaware Bay and a helicopter from Air Station Atlantic City were deployed to survey the scene and begin initial assessments. The sheen was a narrow band of oil five to six miles long, near the center of the bay in the main shipping channel, east of Port Mahon in Kent County, Del.

ILLEGAL MIGRANTS INTERDICTED

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas, Apr. 21 — CGC Steelhead interdicted a 66-foot commercial fishing boat, carrying 21 illegal migrants today 50 miles northeast of Port Mansfield. During a routine patrol, the crew of a Coast Guard Falcoln jet from Air Station Corpus Christi spotted the commercial fishing boat Esmeralda & Yahir operating suspiciously just inside the U. S. exclusive economic zone. The Steelhead was directed to the fishing vessel's position. During a safety inspection the crew of the Steelhead and Coast Guard Station Port Aransas discovered 21 illegal migrants. The Steelhead escorted the commercial fishing boat into Port Aransas, where Immigrations Customs Enforcement and Customs and Border Patrol agents took custody of the illegal migrants.

New York Welcome

New York, May 5 — America's Tall Ship, the 295-foot Coast Guard Barque Eagle, sailed through New York Harbor. The Eagle docked at Pier 17 at the South Street Seaport for the weekend and was open to the public for tours. The Eagle allows future officers the ability to apply the navigation, engineering, and leadership training they receive in classes at the Coast Guard Academy to the real-life challenges of life at sea.

Photo by PA2 Mike Lutz, PADET New York

TEENAGER MEDEVACED

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich., Apr. 27 — Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City air crew evacuated a 16-year-old girl from the Beaver Island Clinic Thursday night. The crew of a HH-65 Dolphin helicopter hoisted the girl and transported her to Munson Hospital, where she was treated for a ruptured blood clot. The girl had a tonsillectomy a week ago and experienced bleeding into her airway.

RESPONDING TO MULTIPLE CASES

MCKINLEYVILLE, Calif., Apr. 20 — Coast Guard Sector Humboldt Bay responded to five cases from the California/Oregon border to the southern tip of the Noyo River today. The Sector crews helped three vessels adrift due to engine problems, saved one vessel taking on water and helped locate a survivor of a sunken fishing vessel through the use of the vessel's 406 EPIRB.

RESCUE SWIMMER RECEIVES MEDAL

ALAMEDA, Calif., Apr. 5 — AST2 Dennis Moyer received the prestigious Air Medal this morning at Air Station San Francisco for his rescue of a woman trapped in a submerged car near Ukiah, during torrential rains on New Year's Eve. The Air Medal is awarded to military personnel for heroic meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight including response to floods and the rescue of survivors from disasters.

AUXILIARISTS RESCUE HAWAII TEENS

HONOLULU, Apr. 22 - A Coast Guard Auxiliary crew in Hawaii is being lauded for rescuing a group of teenagers aboard a demasted sailboat outside Kaneohe Bay. Two Auxiliary vessels were engaged in a boat crew training exercise in the bay on April 14 when they received the distress call from Sector Honolulu. The original call reported that the disabled sailboat was on fire, although it turned out the vessel was simply disabled. An Auxiliary 23-foot SAFE Boat that was about two and a half miles away, responded. Less than 10 minutes later the Auxiliary crew spotted the 24-foot sailboat, its deck littered with broken mast, rigging and sails. After negotiating four to six-foot seas the Auxiliarists returned to the pier with the sailboat in tow to be greeted by a convoy of fire trucks, ambulances and police vehicles with red and blue lights flashing. Fortunately, all of the youths were able to return to shore uninjured.

HEALY CREW TO THE RESCUE

KODIAK, Alaska, May 6 — The crew of the CGC Healy safely transferred aboard a man from the British sailing vessel Jersey Clipper tonight 680 miles southeast of Dutch Harbor. The Coast Guard command center in Juneau and the Canadian Coast Guard in Halifax received a call from the United Kingdom Coast Guard requesting a medical evacuation of the man from the Jersey Clipper. The sailor was transported by the Healy to Dutch Harbor for further medical treatment.

Boat Fire

SEATTLE, April 27 — Six people are safe after battling an early morning fire on a 56-foot commercial fishing boat one mile west of Richmond Beach near Edmonds. The crew of the tugboat Samish reported to Sector Seattle, that the fishing vessel Carol M was on fire and was in need of assistance. Station Seattle dispatched a 41-foot utility boat and Air Station Port Angeles, launched an HH-65 Dolphin helicopter to assist. The crewmembers of the Carol M and the Tug Samish were able to fight the fire until the Chief Seattle arrived and contained the fire at about 11 a.m. The Carol M was towed to Pier 91 by a commercial salvage vessel where marine inspectors from Sector Seattle will inspect the vessel.

Coast Guard Photo

Coast Guard

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Vice Commandant
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Submissions: We need your stories, photographs, comments and suggestions. Deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month. Articles will appear 1.5 months after that deadline. Submit your stories to: U.S. Coast Guard (G-IPA-1), 2100 2nd Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20593-0001, or e-mail them to cgmag@comdt.uscg.mil. For more guidelines, visit the magazine Web site and click on "submissions" or call the editor at (202) 267-0928.

Letters to the editor: Please limit remarks to 150 words or less. No names will be withheld. Provide rank, first and last name, phone number and unit. Letters may be condensed because of space. Not all letters will be published.

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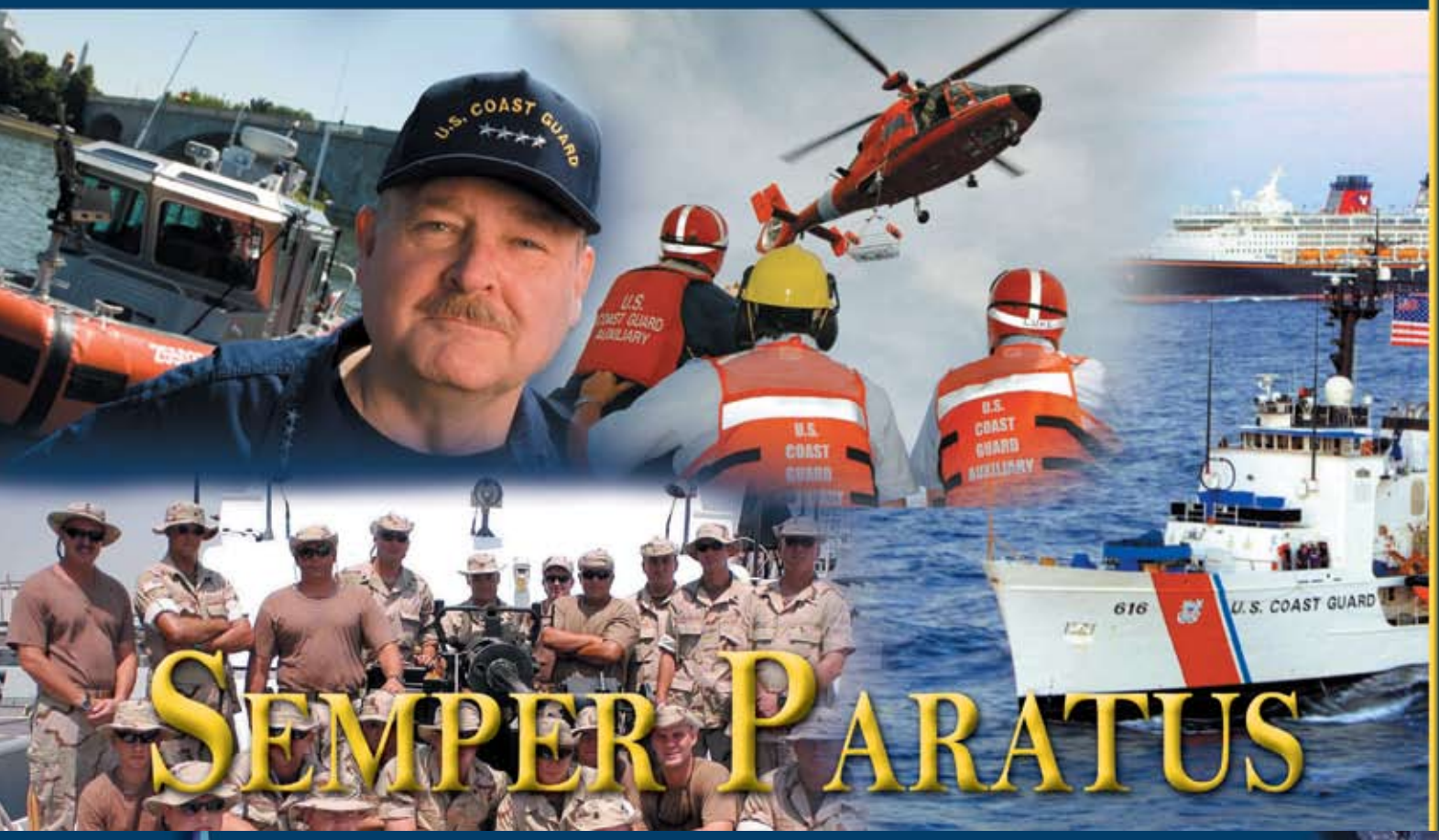
Ready Today • Preparing For Tomorrow

Mission Execution is why we exist and has been since 1790. While the character of our Service endures, we must adapt to the needs of the Nation in the maritime domain. We will focus our entire organization, our force structure, doctrine, and processes, on improved mission execution. We will make a difference in the lives of every American, every day.

People and Platforms are the foundation for successful mission execution. We will develop the best trained, the most versatile and inclusive workforce in the Federal government, equipped with the most capable and technologically advanced fleet of multi-mission boats, ships, aircraft, and support systems the Coast Guard has ever had.

Mission Support enables our people and platforms to execute our missions. Every member of our Coast Guard is a critical link in the chain of mission execution. The dedication and work ethic of our people have sustained us through the years. We will now develop a forward-looking support system built around our multi-mission forces to meet the needs of the Nation.

Organizational Character... Who We Are As we adapt to meet new mission requirements, we will retain our organizational character as a military, multi-mission, maritime service. Our core values, principles of operations, and leadership competencies together with a bias for action remain fundamental to our success. This character has been tested from the rooftops of New Orleans to the oil platforms of the Persian Gulf. It sustains us.



Semper Paratus

Adm Thad Allen
Coast Guard Commandant

1967 CG ACADEMY
1971 CGC ANDROSCOGGIN
1973 RCC CONTROLLER, GANTSEC
1974 CO, LORSTA LAMPANG, THAILAND
1975 CGC GALLATIN
1977 WATCH OFFICER, EPIC
1979 COMMANDER, GROUP ATLANTIC CITY
1982 CO, CGC CITRUS
1984 GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
1986 D3 PLANNING OFFICER
1987 MLCLANT CHIEF PLANNING & BUDGET BRANCH
1988 SLOAN FELLOW - MIT
1989 DEPUTY PROJ MGR WHEC FRAM
1990 DEPUTY PROJ MGR COASTAL BUOY TENDER REPLACEMENT
1992 OFFICE OF BUDGET AND PROGRAMS
1993 GROUP COMMANDER/COTP GROUP LONG ISLAND SOUND
1996 DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
1999 D7 COMMANDER/ COMMARDEZSEC
2001 LANTAREA COMMANDER/ COMMARDEZLANT
2002 CHIEF OF STAFF
2006 COMMANDANT

All Threats
All Hazards
Always Ready

Mission Execution...

... is why we exist and has been since 1790. While the character of our Service endures, we must adapt to the needs of the Nation in the maritime domain. We will focus our entire organization, our force structure, doctrine, and processes, on improved mission execution. We will make a difference in the lives of every American, every day.

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ALL THREATS • ALL HAZARDS

DEDICATED TO SECURITY From left to right, Coast Guard 5th District Commander Rear Adm. Larry Hereth, Navy Second Fleet Commander Vice Adm. Mark Fitzgerald, Virginia Congresswoman Thelma Drake, and Portsmouth, Va., Mayor James Holley III officially dedicate the first Sector Command Center — Joint Harbor Operations Center in Portsmouth, March 24.

Joint Harbor Operations Center

Prototype sets standard for port monitoring systems

Story and photos by PA3 Kip Wadlow, LANTAREA

PORTSMOUTH, Va. - The Coast Guard and Navy unveiled the first of 35 Sector Command Center - Joint Harbor Operations Centers at Integrated Support Command, here, March 23. SCC-JHOC is the newest method for protecting and monitoring America's ports.

"This is the model we want to export around the country," said 5th District Commander Rear Adm. Larry Hereth.

The SCC-JHOC combines detection capability and command and control functions of Coast Guard and Navy entities within the port of Hampton Roads. The operation center monitors, collects and provides valuable information and coordination capability to other federal, state and local agencies 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The SCC-JHOC allows Coast Guard and Navy personnel to detect, monitor and track daily vessel movements, critical port infrastructure, and essential waterways through a system of radar, cameras, infrared cameras and other sensors that span the port. Additionally, the staff would assume tactical control and coordination of responding law enforcement agencies during suspected and actual maritime security threats.

"This center is about maintaining awareness," said Sector Hampton Roads Commander Capt. Robert O'Brien. "And that awareness is key to the safety of our port."

The SCC-JHOC's foundation extends back to the original JHOC, which was established in November 2001 at Naval Station Norfolk to provide maritime domain awareness and improved command and control capabilities in the Hampton Roads area.

Through agreements between the Coast Guard and Navy, the JHOC was organized as a prototype operation offering expanded surveillance and response capabilities and resources to meeting the emerging anti-terrorism force protection mission. To promote effectiveness, the JHOC was co-located with other Coast Guard watches at a new facility in 2004, and all watches were combined into the Sector Command Center (SCC) in 2005, coinciding with the establishment of Coast Guard Sector Hampton Roads.

The SCC-JHOC is the prototype that and will be used as a model for all 35 of the Coast Guard's Sector Command Centers.

42-in-42

Diligence reaches milestone on patrol

While on a 53-day patrol in the Windward Pass, the CGC Diligence intercepted a disabled sailboat with approximately 2,875 pounds of marijuana onboard, giving the cutter its 42nd bust in 42 years of commissioned service.

Besides confiscating the marijuana, the Diligence saved the sailboat and crew from 10-12 foot seas.

Patrolling 1,000 miles from its homeport in Wilmington, N.C., the Diligence also transferred three tons of cocaine, (street value: $50 million), and five suspected narcotics smugglers. The crew also responded to five search and rescue cases, assisting 30 people.

The crew also conducted 23 boardings, 16 of which were in support of a joint operation between the Drug Enforcement Agency and the Turks and Caicos Islands. The operation thwarted a speed boat believed to be a logistics support vessel for illegal drug traffickers.

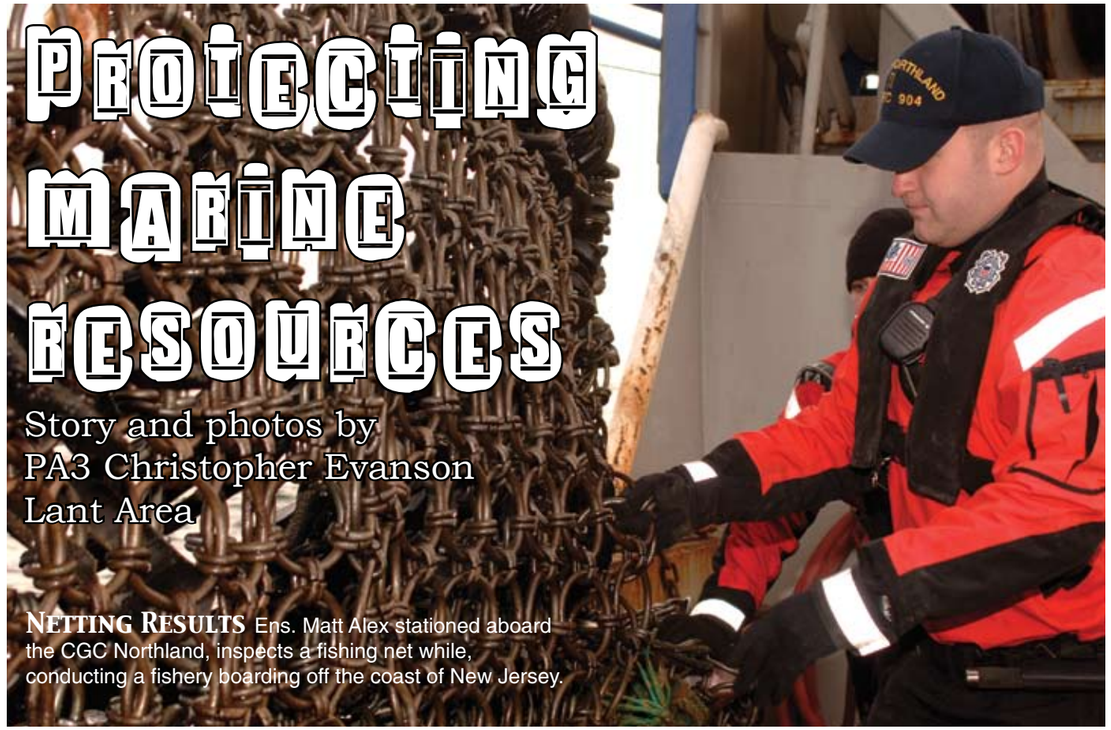
Commenting on the crew's success, Cmdr. A. R. Gentilella, Diligence's commanding officer, said, "The crew creates their own good luck through pride, professionalism and hard work."

DILIGENT DELIVERY (Left to right) Seaman Alonzo Rempesent, MK2 Nicolas Fertal, BM3 Robert Simpson, Lt. j.g. Christopher Weber and Lt. j.g. Matthew Jewczyn were involved in the interception of a boat carrying 2,875 pounds of marijuana.

Story and photos provided by Lt. j.g. Chris Weber, CGC Diligence

PROTECTING MARINE RESOURCES

Story and photos by PA3 Christopher Evanson Lant Area



NETTING RESULTS Ens. Matt Alex stationed aboard the CGC Northland, inspects a fishing net while, conducting a fishery boarding off the coast of New Jersey.

When people think of the U.S. Coast Guard, images of rescue helicopters saving lives from condemned rooftops in the days following Hurricane Katrina are still very abundant. However, before and after Katrina, other missions within the Coast Guard continue at the heart of maritime operations.

The crew of the 270-foot Portsmouth, Va., based Coast Guard Cutter Northland embarked on a two-month living marine resources patrol Dec. 21, 2005, in the waters off New England.

LMR patrols are a component of a versatile approach aimed at protecting an essential economic resource and protecting fishermen taking part in one of the most dangerous professions in the United States. The Coast Guard cutters on the east coast are responsible for boarding and inspecting fishing vessels that fish the dangerous North Atlantic waters.

"The fishing industry in the United States contributes millions of dollars to the economy, provides thousands of jobs, and most importantly provides a much needed food source," said Capt. Michael Giglio, commanding officer of the Northland.

The LMR mission is one of the Coast Guard's most complex missions. With more than 5,000 documented fishing vessels in New England, the Coast Guard's actions alone would be hard pressed to protect the fish stocks.

"The Coast Guard is the principal federal agency responsible for enforcement at sea and we work closely with the National Marine Fisheries Service to ensure these vessels adhere to federal laws and regulations designed to preserve the various fisheries off New England," Giglio said.

In fact, in an era when terrorism has spawned a school of new homeland security initiatives, older missions such as fishery management are still needed.

"In the years since 9/11, the Coast Guard has taken great efforts to restore legacy mission areas such as fisheries enforcement," said Lt. Cmdr. Jeffrey Randall, assistant chief of the Office of Law Enforcement for the Fifth District. "For example, in fiscal year 2004 the Coast Guard dedicated 88,162 hours to fisheries enforcement, up 12 percent from fiscal year 2003."

The living marine resource mission is designed to implement three important strategies, protect U.S. waters from foreign encroachment, enforce domestic fisheries laws, and honor international fishery agreements.

Even with high compliance rates, Coast Guard boarding teams still find vessels that attempt to skirt the regulations by using undersized mesh nets, a practice that catches surplus amounts of immature fish, and is a violation of fishing permits.

"We know there are a handful of fishermen that will be driven by greed or a total disregard for the regulations," said Giglio. "So we're out here everyday looking for them."

While underway in the First District, the Northland's boarding teams boarded more than 30 fishing vessels. Their presence on the fertile fishing ground also enables quick response to emergencies. During the patrol, the Northland responded to four search and rescue cases, some involving disabled and adrift vessels beyond the reach of shoreside towing services.

"While we spent most of our time during this patrol,

enforcing fisheries regulations, our primary responsibility is to ensure safety at sea," added Giglio.

Whether it's responding to an at sea emergency or conducting an inspection, the Coast Guard's focus is to ensure vessels are properly equipped and their crews trained to safeguard themselves from potential hazards caused by the elements that exist offshore, he said.

While the Northland was very successful during this patrol, the fisheries mission is the latest in a string of operations the crew has been tasked with carrying out. The majority of recent patrols had the Northland operating in the Caribbean as part of the Joint Inter-Agency Task Force South, conducting counter drug operations, and most recently in the Gulf of Mexico where they supplied relief to the hurricane-ravaged south.

"The LMR mission is totally different than what our crew is accustomed to," said MK2 Steve J. Fleming, a boarding team member.

"We understand that most fishermen we board are honest and simply trying to make a living. But it's still an important mission to ensure that fishermen are not fishing illegally in areas where our natural resources can be endangered," he said.

In addition, the increasing complex nature of fishery management regulations require additional enforcement resources. "Some efficiency can be gained through expanded use of Vessel Monitoring Systems and other technological means to improve the Coast Guard's patrol efforts," said Randall.

After a successful patrol, the Northland sailed home to a gathering of family and friends eager for some long awaited hugs and affection.

But this summer, the ever flexible crew of the Northland will swap its LMR cover for a flagship one. They will make a momentous patrol across the Atlantic Ocean and into the Mediterranean Sea for a three-month European deployment, where they will conduct joint exercises with foreign coast guard's and host diplomatic visits.

Fish Protection

▲ A boarding team member stationed aboard the CGC Northland, inspects a fish hold of a crab fishing vessel while conducting a fishery inspection.

◀ The CGC Northland, home-ported in Portsmouth, Va., approaches the Frank H. Wetmore, a crab fishing vessel off the coast of New England.

▶ Members of the boarding team stationed aboard the CGC Northland conduct a size inspection of a fishing net while on-board a fishing vessel off the coast of New Jersey.

TACTICAL DESCENT

STORY AND PHOTOS BY PA3 LUKE PINNEO, 1ST DIST.

FREE FALL Dwarfed by the nearly 50-foot-high tower, an MSST member and student of the Atlantic Area Vertical Insertion Program descends a fast rope during the week-long rope course held here. The students start descending from the lowest level and, over the course of several days, work their way to the top.

The idea of Coast Guardsmen going aboard a ship to inspect it is not a new concept. Yet, as a small team of boarding officers stand in the roaring and windy opening of a helicopter over the deck of a ship some 30 feet below, they are part of a new chapter in Coast Guard Maritime Law Enforcement. One by one, they exit and descend to the ship by way of vertical insertion.

Vertical insertion is used by boarding teams to deploy from a helicopter to the deck of a ship by sliding down a rope. The training and risk factors involved, are not simple. Because of the ever-increasing need to have this type of capability in the Coast Guard, a training program in the First District has begun, with the ultimate goal of qualifying all Maritime Safety and Security Teams in Atlantic Area. Located on the Massachusetts Military Reservation, also home of Coast Guard Air Station Cape Cod, the Atlantic Area Vertical Insertion Training Center has fully taken shape.

"It's not as simple as just sliding down a rope," said lead instructor BMCS Steve McDonald. During the course, students are immersed in a program unlike any other.

Students literally begin learning the ropes at the course's training tower. The wooden tower stands nearly 50 feet high. From an overhang at the windy top, a thick, green rope dangles to the ground of crushed rubber below.

Before the students are allowed even to enter the tower, they must meet the challenge of the upper body strength evaluation. First without and then again with full gear, the students are required to do a set number of pull-ups and chin-ups – two of each with full gear, and five without.

"Anything can be dangerous if it's not done the right way," said McDonald, who, from the very beginning of the course, consistently reiterates to the students the need for safety — a point well illustrated by the incremental method used where the students get a feel for the rope one floor at a time. "We have them start low and build up before even getting near a helicopter," he said.

For two days straight, that's just what they do. Time and time again, they climb and descend, all the while preparing for real deployments from a helicopter where things are quite different.

In a real boarding, descending down a rope from a helicopter onto a ship poses many unique challenges. "You're deploying from a helicopter with a lot of moving parts, onto a ship with a lot of moving parts," said Lt. Paul Casey, lead instructor. The pilot also might be fighting strong winds, flying over a hatch, a life-line or water. However, each of these situations is anticipated during the course and the instructors are quick to provide the students with effective methods of overcoming such challenges.

"We teach them to brake with their boots," said McDonald. They need to be able to control their descent and stop midway if they have to. "It's not really gripping with your hands, it's more your feet," explained McDonald. They are required to brake and count aloud for 10 seconds before continuing down to the ground, while constantly keeping their eyes on their landing area.

At the tower, the landing surface is made from crushed rubber pieces. It resembles thick, all-rubber gravel and provides safe, soft landings for the trainees. As safe as it is, it gives a false sense of comfort that is painfully revealed to the students when they move into the next phase of the course: deployments to the tarmac. "That's when you're really going to feel it," said McDonald. After one has gotten used to the soft rubber, a shock to the ankles is not uncommon on the first deployment or two to the hard tarmac and eventually to the deck of a cutter. This pain is in addition to the tight muscles and sore joints that develop over the course of the entire grueling program.

"It's a physically demanding course, no doubt," said McDonald. "The water survival really tires you out — the shallow-water egress trainer chair, going upside-down and taking pool water up through your nostrils. You're upside-down and trying to stay calm, breathing through a little emergency scuba bottle — that's tiring," he continued. "You get to the tower, and start with the pull-ups and PT test. Then you've got to climb up and down. That's a lot of climbing steps — up and down — and those multiple descents down the rope. It is certainly a tough course, but it offers a big payoff."

It is in fact a necessity in today's world for the Coast Guard to possess this ability. McDonald states that, vertical insertion gives the Coast Guard the ability to rush boarding officers to the deck of a ship in a matter of seconds.

"Our teams are very well-qualified, once our feet hit the deck, to control pretty much any situation that we're put into," he said. "We have a pretty overwhelming amount of firepower if we really need it, plus we have the training and tactics to go along with it," he said, illustrating how vertical insertion training is complimentary to other MSST training programs.

The powerful impact and potential of the vertical insertion training program is seen not only by the instructors, but also by the students, who come away from the course with an appreciation for it.

"We've had nothing but positive feedback on the facilities, the flight mechanics, the pilots, and our instructors," said Casey. He also said many of the Atlantic Area MSST units have been eagerly waiting for this type of training program to be available, especially one where all of the needed elements are centrally located.

"They're happy to have this qualification," Casey said. "Because they know it's definitely a vital tool to have."

RAPID DESCENT BMCS Steve McDonald zips down a rope during a vertical insertion training exercise, Nov. 1, 2005, at the Massachusetts Military Reservation in Sandwich, Mass.

Rolling Down the River

Story and photos by PA3 Robert Reed, 8th Dist.

Theirs is a world of hard work, noise, sweat, grime, dirt, mud, grease, splinters, scratches, scrapes, mosquitoes and sore muscles. Theirs is a world of work that starts at dawn and ends when the job is done. Theirs is a world of working-class heroes.

They are the crew of the CGC Pamlico, the 160-foot construction tender homeported in New Orleans, and they know what it's like to get their hands dirty.

In fact, the Pamlico was among the first vessels to provide assistance in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. The Pamlico was an integral part of the evacuation of more than 5,000 people from Chalmette to Algiers, Aug. 31 through Sept. 2.

"We work long hours here, sunrise until past sunset - 12 to fourteen hours a day usually," said Fireman Ryan A. Pearson.

The crew of the Pamlico has been placing and repairing aids to navigation in Americas' waterways since it was commissioned Aug. 11, 1976, and its current crew does what all those who have served on it before have done — work hard to keep those who navigate these waters safe.

With more than 1,200 navigational aids in an area of responsibility that covers 130 miles of coastline and bayous and 250 miles of the Mississippi River, it's a pretty big endeavor, but somebody has to do it.

Preparing to embark on their current mission, the crew uses the massive crane located on the ship's deck to lift large wooden piles, much like oversized telephone poles, from the dock and stack them on its deck.

PAMLICO PARADISE The CGC Pamlico plies toward Freshwater Bayou, La., to anchor for the night, Feb. 27. The New Orleans-based Pamlico services aids to navigation along the gulf coast and up the Mississippi River.

Then they steam down the river, the black hull of the Pamlico pushing through the brown water. When they reach a point that needs a navigation marker the captain, CWO David Lewald stops the ship and calls over the loudspeakers, "OK, set your spuds." With this, the crew lowers the large metal pylons that are attached to either side of the ship into the muddy bottom below to hold the ship stable.

It's time to go to work.

Old, broken or substandard navigational aids are pulled from the water and repaired as needed. Some of these aids are held down by large concrete anchors, which are covered in thick, foul-smelling mud. When they are pulled up from the water they must be cleaned before they can be stored. The mud gets everywhere, on the deck, on their clothes, and in their hair.

"It can get very dirty," said Pearson.

After the old markers are stored, the crane is used to lift the wooden piles, which are guided by ropes and greasy winches, and then placed vertically into the water. Attached to the crane a diesel-fired hammer, known to the crew simply as "The Hammer," slips over the top of the piles and pounds them down. Again and again it strikes, each time with a thunderous bang, until the pile is firmly driven into the earth at the bottom. When this is done the crew attaches navigational aids to the piles such as lights, horns and reflective signs, which they have pre-prepped, drilled, and assembled. Then they move on to the next one.

The piles are covered in splinters, just waiting to stab a finger. The mud from the submerged anchors splashes onto the deck, making it a sticky, slippery, smelly mess. The sun beats down relentlessly from the sky, and everywhere the crew turns there are more and more mosquitoes.

"It's not that bad here as long as you like working," Seaman Sean "Pat" Patrick said, his white teeth shining brilliantly in contrast with the grime that covers his face.

MKC John Cuddy, the engineering petty officer, said that he had gotten used to the work, but that it was long hours away from his family.

Everyone has to spend time away from their loved ones, but some of the crew has a fresh perspective on the work they do. Seaman Corey Walter, who is the "new guy" on board, having only reported to the ship in mid-March, said that although the work was hard, he thinks it's pretty cool. "It's like nothing I've ever done before. You do get pretty dirty, though."

The work is not only dirty but dangerous, making safety a top priority.

"You've got to make sure everyone maintains a lot of situational awareness and that they know what's going on around them," says DC1 Kevin Bowman, the ship's safety supervisor, as he turns and quickly walks across the muddy deck to warn the men working on a navigational aid to keep their eyes on a wake coming towards them. The wake might upset the platform they are standing on. "Things can get pretty bad pretty quickly out here," he says as he walks back.

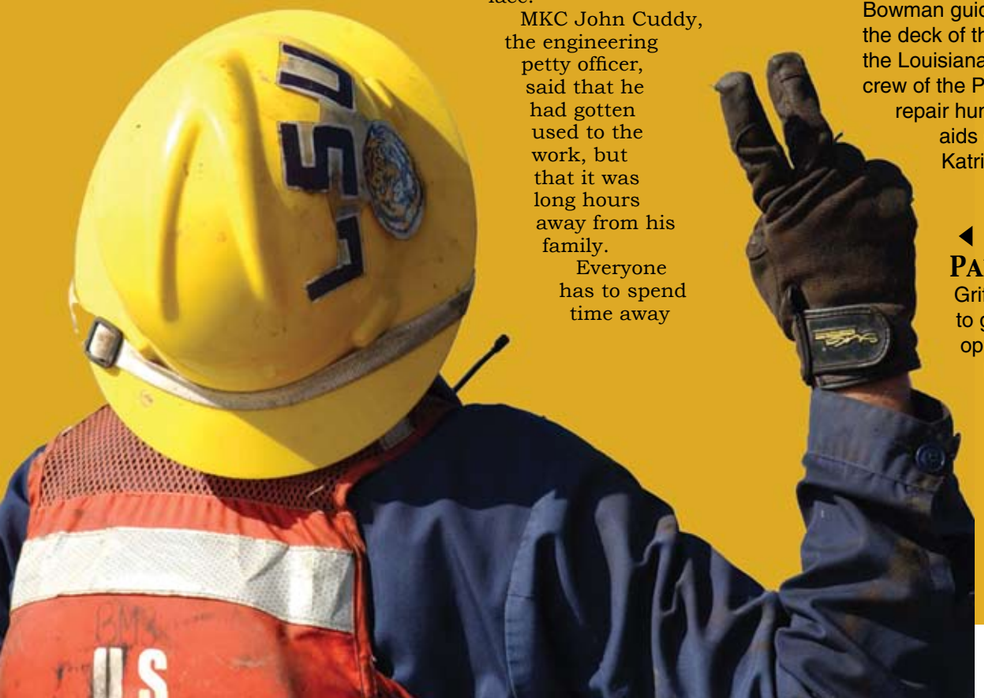
"There's a lot of joking after hours, but during the day we work well together as a team," said BM3 Nathan "Nate" Griffin, the construction deck supervisor.

Their work seems to be appreciated though. "If you sit on the bridge at night you can hear the boat pilots and captains talking to each other on the radio about how nice it is to see that the channel markers are being fixed," said BM2 James Meissner. "It's a rewarding job that lets you actually see the results of what you do."

Fireman Justin "J.T." Taylor said that although the job can be pretty stressful at times, it's not all work on the Pamlico. After the workday is done and the captain has set "condition bug zebra," meaning to close all of the outer doors so that the swarms of mosquitoes can't get in, it's time to relax. After a well-earned shower, the crew spends their time playing video games, watching television, working out and playing card games before they hit the rack.

It's a job that has to be done, and the crew of the Pamlico are the ones to do it. Through all of the noise, sweat, grime, dirt, mud, grease, splinters, scratches, scrapes, mosquitoes and sore muscles, they shine like the beacons they place.

▲ **Buoy Guide** DC1 Kevin Bowman guides a marker buoy onto the deck of the CGC Pamlico off of the Louisiana coast, March 2. The crew of the Pamlico is working to repair hundreds of navigational aids damaged by Hurricane Katrina.



◄ **Buoy Guide, Part II** BM3 Nathan Griffin uses hand signals to guide the crane operator aboard the Pamlico as they lower a pile into place during an ATON repair.

◄ **Lumberjack in Training** Seaman Corey Walter stands on a stack of giant piles onboard the construction tender Pamlico as he resets a guide cable in preparation to set a pile off the Louisiana coast in the Gulf of Mexico. The piles, which resemble oversized telephone poles, are lifted by crane and placed vertically in the water where they are driven into the bottom. Aids to navigation are then placed upon them.

◄ **Heeded Advice** BM3 Nathan Griffin listens to DC1 Kevin Bowman, the Pamlico's safety supervisor, during an aids to navigation construction operation.

Piecing Together A Mishap

Photo by Lt. Shawn Geraghty, Air Station Traverse City

Story by PA1 Alan Haraf, 11th Dist.

Within 24 to 48 hours following a major mishap involving Coast Guard aircraft, a team known as the Mishap Analysis Board (MAB) is convened to try and determine the cause of the accident.

Assembling the team starts when the involved unit initiates the critical incident notification system. This begins the process of notifying the appropriate directorates at Coast Guard Headquarters and the Department of Homeland Security. Upon notification, the Commandant's Aviation Safety Board, consisting of G-RCA (Chief of Aviation Forces), CG-41 (Chief of Aeronautical Engineering) and CG-1131 (Chief of Aviation Safety), confers to pick the board president and the other members of the MAB.

Findings and recommendations are listed in a Mishap Analysis Report (MAR), which the MAB writes.

Following the February crash of HH-6549 from Air Station Humboldt Bay, a MAB, comprised of personnel from around the country, within 30 hours they had gathered in McKinleyville, Calif., and then spent two weeks doing the initial investigation. During that time they conducted interviews, reviewed reports, data, records, and photos, and examined pieces of the aircraft wreckage.

"The purpose is to investigate an incident from a neutral point of view," said Lt. Roberto Torres, Flight Safety Officer from Air Station New Orleans and member of the MAB. "In order to find out what happened and more importantly to prevent it from ever happening again."

In addition to a flight safety officer, an aviation MAB is presided over by a senior aviator, typically the commanding officer of an air station. Additional members consist of an aviation engineering officer, a maintenance officer for the type of aircraft involved in the mishap, a flight surgeon, an officer and enlisted member of the appropriate aircraft's standardization team at the Aviation Training Center in Mobile, Alabama, and an aviation survival technician. Other members can be designated as necessary.

The board always convenes following a Class "A" or "B" Aviation Mishap. Class "A" mishaps involve a fatality or more than $1 million in damage to equipment. Meanwhile, a Class "B" mishap involves damage in excess of $200,000. Occasionally, a board is convened for a lesser mishap if the CASB deems it necessary.

A secondary but important role of the MAB is to determine if all the aviation life support equipment (helmets, vests, flotation devices, etc.) worked as advertised, making recommendations for equipment changes or upgrades, as necessary.

Prior to the arrival of the MAB, however, the unit involved in an incident is responsible for executing a pre-mishap plan. This involves, first and foremost, making sure that the crew is safe. Next, the unit needs to preserve all evidence along with planning the aircraft salvage, as necessary.

A MAB typically takes 14-21 days to complete its investigative process, at which time the aircraft is once again turned over to the unit. The respective unit will then work with the Aircraft Repair & Supply Center in Elizabeth City, N.C., to make arrangements for final transportation for repairs.

Typically, the MAB reconvenes within several weeks after their initial meeting to finalize their conclusions and recommendations. The board will then present the Mishap Analysis Report, including results of any necessary tests, to the unit involved in the mishap. The unit commanding officer then endorses the MAR, as does the District and Area Commanders, before it is forwarded for review by the Commandant's Aviation Safety Board. The CASB then prepares a summary document for final review by the CCS and includes a draft letter for the CCS signature detailing the mishap cause and what fleet-wide actions are required to prevent a similar mishap.

Recommendations of previous Mishap Analysis Boards include:

PROVIDE REALISTIC TRAINING SCENARIOS IN SIMULATORS

- Improved the aerodynamic modeling and capabilities to enable realistic low airspeed and hover maneuver training
- Upgraded to allow realistic shipboard landing and approach
- Continued to stress single-engine fly-out scenarios in the simulator during all transition and proficiency courses
- Provided more emphasis to water approaches

RECURRENT SIMULATOR TRAINING

- Incorporated pilot recurrent annual simulator proficiency training requirements into Air Operations Manual

ELEVATED PAD/PINNACLE OPERATIONS

- Incorporated information on elevated pad/pinnacle approach and landing procedures in the HH-65 and HH-65 flight manuals
- Incorporated specific ground and flight training transition HH-65 and HH-60 courses to address the unique aspects of elevated pad/pinnacle operations

RADIO GUARD/CRASH BOAT COVERAGE OVER WATER

- Provided minimum radio guard and crash boat requirements for over-water training was redefined to ensure a boat or a fixed-wing asset is in the area

FLIGHT INSTRUMENTS

- Incorporated a low airspeed altitude hold capability in the HH-65A. Low attitude hold will be incorporated into the flight director

Humboldt Bay Crew Escapes Injury From Downed Helo

MCKINLEYVILLE, Calif. — Four crewmembers from Air Station Humboldt Bay escaped serious injury after their HH-65 Dolphin helicopter set down in the surf near shore during a rescue operation, Feb. 11.

The crew was responding to a capsized boat with four people in the water near the coast of Samoa shortly after 1:00 p.m.

After arriving on scene, a rescue swimmer was lowered to assist a 78-year-old female, placing her in a "quick strop" rescue harness. The pilot then flew them a short distance to the beach where the swimmer immediately began CPR.

Shortly thereafter, the helicopter went down in the 6-8 foot surf zone and rolled onto its side. The three remaining helicopter crewmembers escaped safely through the copilot and cabin doors and continued to assist other agencies in searching for the remaining three people from the overturned boat.

Meanwhile, a second HH-65 helicopter was launched shortly after the call that the first helicopter had gone down. They arrived on scene and located the fourth person of the overturned boat. Two of the four persons drowned, a 59-year-old male and his 82-year-old mother.

The first helicopter was secured at the scene after a tow truck dragged it out of the surf. It was brought back to the air station for the Mishap Analysis Board. On March 1, the helicopter was shipped to Elizabeth City, N.C. where it will be reconfigured into a HH-65C model. The cause of the mishap is still under investigation.

Race Time

Tip of the Spear Jeff Burton leads the pack during the April 8, O'Reilly 300 race held at the Texas Motor Speedway. Burton went on to finish in sixth place.

Story and Photos by Lt. Col. William Thurmond, U.S. Army

Launching into their third year in NASCAR Busch series, the U.S. Coast Guard's racing team is riding an unprecedented wave of success, winning in four races and finishing in the top-five in all but three of its first twelve races (at time of publication).

Based on their impressive early-season performance, don't be too surprised to find the orange-and-blue Chevrolet in victory lane a few more times before the 2006 season wraps-up in Homestead, Fla., this November.

From all appearances, it seems the switch this winter to the vaunted Richard Childress Racing stable has produced the kind of results of which other military-sponsored entries can only dream. This is not surprising, given that RCR has produced nine NASCAR championships and was the home of late-great racing legend Dale Earnhardt.

"I'm really excited about RCR being associated with one of the United States' armed forces," said Richard Childress, president and CEO of RCR. "I'm personally excited about it because I know the program they've put together to achieve their goals fits perfectly with our drivers as their representatives."

As Childress indicated, credit for this burst of success also belongs behind the wheel.

Sharing the Coast Guard's driving duties are RCR-teammates Kevin Harvick and Jeff Burton. Both men have more than 20 combined years of experience in the Busch series. Both also compete in the Nextel Cup series, NASCAR's premiere division. And both racers are aggressive, driven performers.

"It's a thrill to be associated with the United States Coast Guard," said Harvick. "Their long and rich tradition matches perfectly with the history at RCR.

"This season, I am not only racing for RCR but also for the Coast Guard men and women who keep America safe. I think this relationship will lead to great success both on and off the track for everyone involved."

Winning in Atlanta

With mid-March storm clouds overhead threatening to put a damper on the proceedings, Harvick's teammate Jeff Burton strapped-in to his number 21 Coast Guard Chevy and joined the rest of the 43-car field on Atlanta's famed speedway.

Starting the race in the outside of row four, Burton knew he had a fast car.

"This is a results-oriented business," said Burton in a post-race interview. "If you have the results, you have to work hard, and if you don't, then you have to work even harder."

Apparently, Burton and RCR know all about working harder.

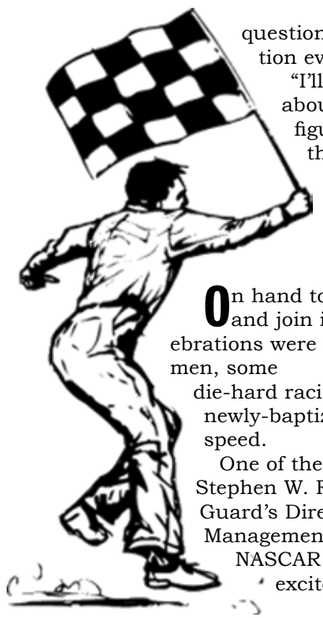
Rocketing to the front of the field and into the lead at lap 40, Burton was never out of the top-10 for the rest of the day. Edging-out former Cup champion Matt Kenseth and fending off numerous challenges from Kasey Kahne, Burton put the Coast Guard, and himself, back into victory lane.

"It was a great day for us and the United States Coast Guard," he said. "Hopefully, we can do it again soon."

"I gotta' tell you, representing the Coast Guard is truly something I don't take lightly. It's an honor. Those men and women put it on the line every day. They're a small force that does a tremendous amount to keep us all safe. For me, it's awesome to be a part of that."

Even after the win, Burton was not satisfied. "It's been a long time since a win. You

Pit Stop The Team Coast Guard Pit Crew races into action during a routine stop for tires and fuel by Jeff Burton and the number 21 car, during the race held at the Texas Motor Speedway.



question yourself -- You question everything."

"I'll go home tonight, think about the race, and try to figure about how I can do things even better."

Witnesses to Victory

On hand to cheer-on their car and join in the victory lane celebrations were several Coast Guardsmen, some die-hard racing fans and others newly-baptized into the world of speed.

One of the latter was Rear Adm. Stephen W. Rochon, the Coast Guard's Director of Personnel Management. Attending his first NASCAR event, Rochon was excited as the race got underway. "I've got my earplugs ready. I'm looking forward to watching our number 21 Coast Guard car in action."

A 36-year Coast Guard veteran, he watched in awe as the Coast Guard's pit crew repeatedly serviced their car in under 15 seconds.

"I'm amazed at the preparation and logistical planning that's involved in racing," said Rochon. "I'm terribly impressed at what goes on. I had no idea."

A New Orleans native, Rochon remarked on the pride he felt for what his service had accomplished in his home town following Hurricane Katrina. "We did some tremendous things down there. My chest was quite full every time I turned on the TV and saw our beautiful orange helicopters plucking people off of rooftops and our boats in the water rescuing people. It made me realize that I made the right decision 36 years ago to join this outfit."

Echoing his sentiments was AMT2 Michael Keohane, an aviation maintenance technician and recruiter, currently assigned to Lant Area.

"We're having no trouble attracting quality recruits into the Coast Guard, especially in light of the heroic work done by our service in the wake of Katrina, he said."

As for the relationship between the Coast Guard and NASCAR, Keohane sees it as a win-win situation.

"We get quite a few potential recruits as a result of our being in NASCAR. The car gives us great nationwide visual recognition. It's merely another tool we can use to attract future members."

Rochon agreeing said, "I hope that by having our car here we're able to reach a lot of other people to recognize the opportunities that exist in the Coast Guard. It's exhilarating seeing our name circling the track, and finishing at the front of the pack so often."

Standing in victory lane and holding the trophy with driver Burton, Rochon and his fellow Coast Guardsmen beamed with well-earned pride.

"What a feeling! That was unreal. And it was my first race, too," said Rochon.

"I think I can consider my self to be a good luck charm. Team owner Richard Childress asked me if I can come to all the races. I gave driver Jeff Burton one of my challenge coins right before the

2006 NASCAR Busch Series Schedule

Date	Location
2/18	Daytona International Speedway
2/25	California Speedway
3/5	Autodromo Hermanos Rodriguez
3/11	Las Vegas Motor Speedway
3/18	Atlanta Motor Speedway
3/25	Bristol Motor Speedway
4/8	Texas Motor Speedway
4/15	Nashville Superspeedway
4/21	Phoenix International Raceway
4/29	Talladega Superspeedway
5/5	Richmond International Raceway
5/12	Darlington Raceway
5/27	Lowe's Motor Speedway
6/3	Dover International Speedway
6/10	Nashville Superspeedway
6/17	Kentucky Speedway
6/24	Milwaukee Mile
6/30	Daytona International Speedway
7/8	Chicagoland Speedway
7/15	New Hampshire International Speedway
7/22	Martinsville Speedway
7/29	Gateway International Speedway
8/5	Indianapolis Raceway Park
8/12	Watkins Glen International
8/19	Michigan International Speedway
8/25	Bristol Motor Speedway
9/2	California Speedway
9/8	Richmond International Raceway
9/23	Dover International Speedway
9/30	Kansas Speedway
10/13	Lowe's Motor Speedway
10/22	Martinsville Speedway
10/28	Memphis Motorsports Park
11/4	Texas Motor Speedway
11/11	Phoenix International Raceway
11/18	Homestead-Miami Speedway

Soaring EAGLE

Story by
BM2 Richard Kitchen,
CGC Eagle

Photos by
PA2 Robin Rask,
USCGR, 13th Dist.

The bridge aboard America's Tall Ship sits shrouded in silence as the crew carries out the normal routine on a simmering August night. Only the humming of a generator blurs the sound of a surging bow wave below. Sails fill the sky. The glowing arms of the galaxy wander through Sagittarius and the Summer Triangle while a blood red Mars crawls towards the zenith from low in the northern sky. Sextants rest in their cases for there is no moon to cut a line between ocean and air. Polaris lays just forward of the starboard beam as the CGC Eagle heels gently on a westerly course across the Atlantic.

Eleven foreign ports were host to the Eagle during its 124-day, 12,881 nautical mile 2005 summer deployment. The Eagle's crew trained 641 Coast Guard Academy cadets, officer candidates, plus dozens of exchange cadets from other military academies and Naval Sea Cadets in the arts of seamanship, nautical science and leadership.

The experience many say they remember most is climbing aloft into the Eagle's rigging. Some reached the first platform called the "fighting tops," and others ascended to the royal yard — 12 stories above the sea. During the free climb up the rig, awareness is honed, and every shroud in hand and ratline under foot is a friend, a refuge, a connection. After all, how often does one literally hold their life in their own hands?

While the royal yard teases, most days pass with the tending of sails, changing of oil in the generator, plotting the Eagle's position, or splicing new stoppers to hold lines.

The sea's absence of morality, however, was showcased on the Eagle's fourth day underway, as a wave breached the bulwarks and washed several trainees across the deck, cementing the lesson that the sea is not an enemy or friend and a ship is not a bubble of security.

While hearing of the Coast Guard's response to Hurricane Katrina make some wonder why a relic such as the Eagle is still in service and how it helps the Coast Guard and the service's public.

The Eagle is not a disaster relief platform. It is expensive to maintain, difficult to navigate in tight quarters, outdated, and calls for great physical effort to make even modest speed. With all that said, the Eagle *is* a floating national treasure.

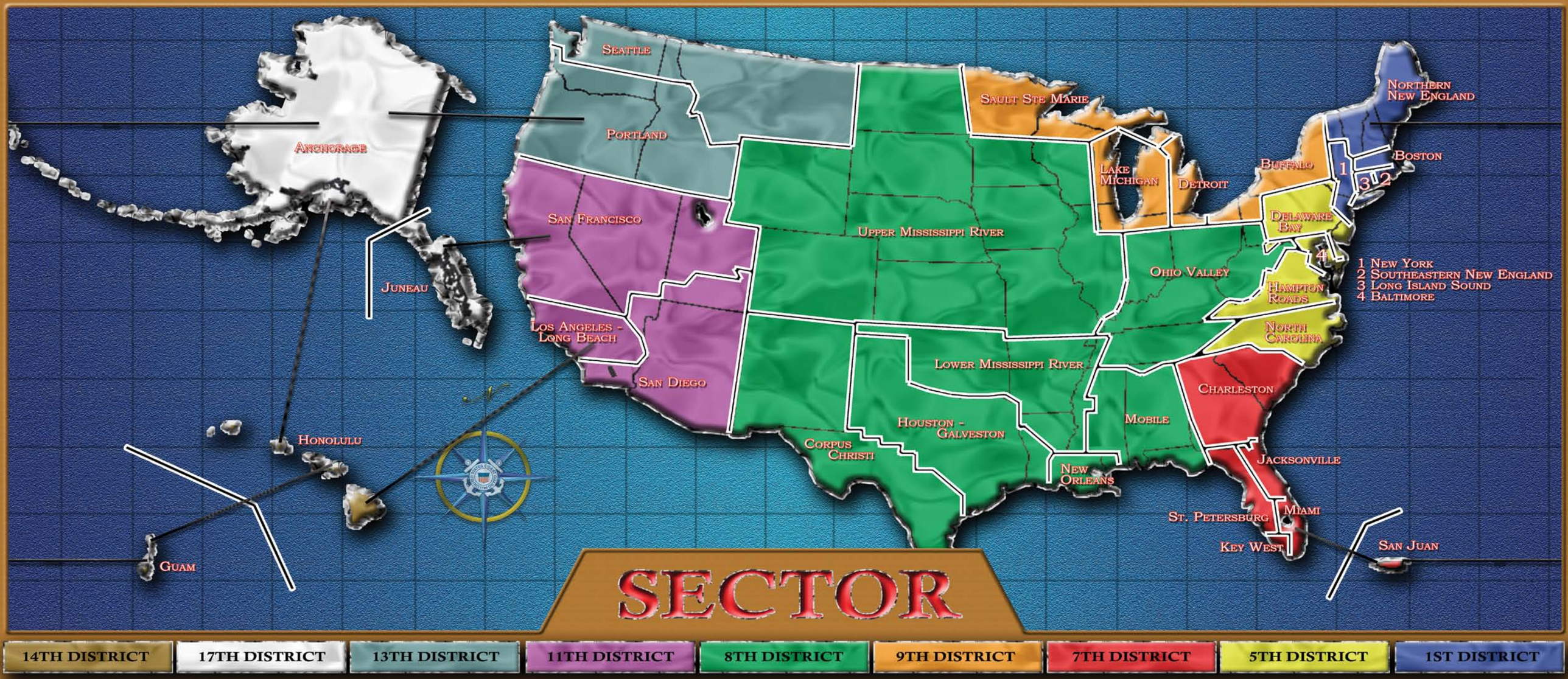
It is put at risk on the high seas and through narrow channels with some of the greenest Coast Guard personnel. The Eagle does it the old way, the new way, and the hard way all at once.

The Eagle sails for the Coast Guard. The Eagle sails to hold roots in the tradition of this fine service and to continually infuse seamanship into the fleet.

The Eagle sails so ancient sailing instruments like the sextant remain valid, so sailors look up to the clouds and wind instead of the weather fax to know if the day will be fair. In all endeavors of a sailing ship, the Eagle intimately connects crew and tradition. The Eagle looks beyond the day's ends and into what it means to be a sailor.

As the Eagle again arrives home, most of the weary crew scurries off to their families and favorite places. Some have the duty blues and remain. One or two will pause at the brow and remember a quiet night in August when it all came together and the Summer Triangle danced with the mizzen, breathing in a gentle sea. *GG*


SECTOR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North Carolina
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3 Long Island Sound
4 Baltimore
Lower Mississippi River
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New Orleans
Jacksonville
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Miami
Key West
San Juan
SECTOR
14TH DISTRICT
17TH DISTRICT
13TH DISTRICT
11TH DISTRICT
8TH DISTRICT
9TH DISTRICT
7TH DISTRICT
5TH DISTRICT
1ST DISTRICT

ONE TEAM FOR ONE FIGHT

STORY BY PA1 MIKE O'BERRY, G-IPA-1 AND MICHAEL SHUMAKER, G-RPD
GAPHIC DESIGN BY PA1 DAVID MOSLEY, G-IPA-1

"Mayday! Mayday! This is the oil tanker OpenSeas, we've collided with another ship and are sinking two miles inside the sea buoy!"

As recently as two years ago, responsibility for responding to this hypothetical distress call rested with a number of people. A group commander would be responsible for launching search and rescue. The captain of the port would be tasked with controlling pollution and deciding whether or not to close the port to other vessel traffic.

But with the advent of Sectors, Coast Guard units can respond with little delay, as the ultimate decision on how to respond now rests with one person.

With the establishment of Sectors Anchorage and Juneau this spring, the journey to transform the Coast Guard into "one team for one fight" reaches the two-year goal of establishing Sectors throughout the Coast Guard. The first Sector was stood up in Miami on July 12, 2004. Since then 34 other Sectors based on captain of the port boundaries were established to cover each geographic area of the United States.

But it wasn't just the merging of traditional missions that forced the most dramatic reorganization in recent memory. It was the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. That day catapulted "homeland security" to the forefront of priorities forcing unprecedented change to the operational environment of the Coast Guard. It required a shift to an organization with the mission flexibility and responsiveness vital for maritime homeland security.

In his January 2004 Commandant's message to all Coast Guard personnel, Adm. Thomas H. Collins presented the Sector strategy by stressing that the need to strengthen unity of command necessitated the adoption of integrated, operation of field commands, called Sectors. Formed by integrating Groups, Marine Safety Offices, Vessel Traffic Services, and in some cases Air Stations, Sectors were created to provide strategically guided, goal-focused, high-performance mission delivery. Through Sectors, the Coast Guard's command and control functions are unified under one local operational commander, resulting in increased interaction and coordination of the litany of Coast Guard responsibilities.

"The beauty of the Sector construct is putting all the authorities, all the resources and all the responsibilities with one person," said Capt. Scott Ferguson, commanding officer of Sector Buffalo. "This was something we should have done many, many years ago. It has proven to be a very good approach."

Capt. Frank Paskewich, whose New Orleans Sector stood up less than two weeks before Hurricane Katrina ravaged his area of responsibility, said, "Whenever you have control of all the assets and people, you can be very nimble in what you do, moving from mission to mission."

Those with first-hand knowledge of the "everything under one command" approach have largely embraced the operating principle behind Sectors. Capt. Curt Springer, commanding officer of Sector Baltimore, added, "Sectors make our response quicker and more efficient. It makes the coordination of Coast Guard assets so much more fluid and it happens much better."

BIRTH OF SECTORS

Before 2004, field operations in a single port fell under multiple mission-based commands that were physically dispersed, had unique chains of command, lacked a consistent voice to the public, and had some mission overlap. Achieving the call to "unity of effort" would be cumbersome using the old multiple command port-level structure.

Previously, a group and its units provided search and rescue, maritime law enforcement, recreational boating safety, and maintained aids to navigation. MSOs performed complementary activities, enforcing federal laws and regulations related to the safety and security of vessels, port facilities, and the marine environment, and assisting other law enforcement agencies.

Challenges arose when competing priorities emerged. According to Capt. Ferguson, when an area was divided into three commands, there were times when missions didn't get performed as effectively as they could. "There's none of that now," he said.

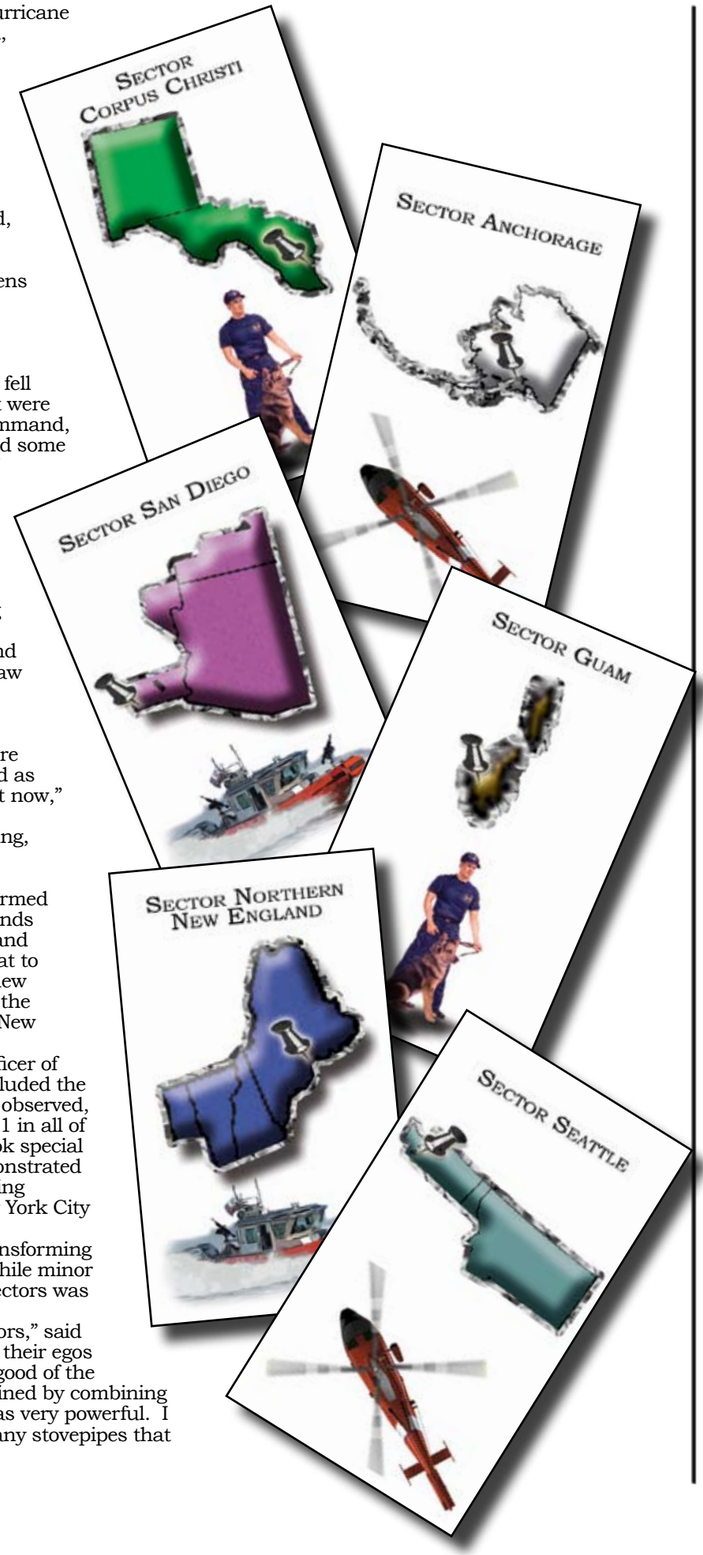
Capt. Paskewich echoed those thoughts saying, "Sectors eliminate any contention between commands as how to best use our resources."

While all Coast Guard field commands performed admirably after Sept. 11, the Activities commands in particular demonstrated the unity of effort and responsiveness needed to thwart the new threat to homeland security. Following their lead, the new Sector organizations were developed based on the Activities prototypes that were established in New York and Baltimore.

Capt. Roger Peoples, former commanding officer of Activities Baltimore, whose responsibilities included the maritime security of Washington, on Sept. 11, observed, "While the Coast Guard responded well to 9/11 in all of our nation's ports, Coast Guard leadership took special notice of the efficiency and unity of effort demonstrated by Activities New York and Baltimore in ensuring maritime security following the attacks in New York City and near our nation's capital."

When asked about challenges they faced transforming their staffs, Sector commanders agreed that while minor challenges are inevitable, the changeover to Sectors was the right move on all fronts.

"Everyone understood we had to create Sectors," said Paskewich. "Everybody worked hard to check their egos at the door and do what's best for the greater good of the Coast Guard. In fact, the synergy that was gained by combining the marine safety field and operational field was very powerful. I saw the staff do an incredible job eliminating any stovepipes that previously existed."



Capt. Brian Kelley, who takes the helm of Sector Baltimore this summer, said that in his eyes, the challenge is that we've taken people out of their comfort zones. "We have people who are well-versed in classic 'O' or 'M' and placing them in the giant Coast Guard world of everything. It forces us to operate out of our comfort zone and I think that is going to make us better people and will focus us on our leadership abilities."

"Once you get into a Sector, you see how well it works. Are there some challenges? Yes, but at the end of the day, having the whole operation under one operational commander gives him or her the ability to resolve all Coast Guard port issues, and provide one stop shopping for our port customers — all of those things outweigh whatever challenges may be out there," said Capt. Curt Springer, commanding officer of Sector Baltimore.

Ferguson agreed, saying, "All matters gelled together real well from the beginning. Yes, there were growing pains and struggles and times when I had to do some counseling to get people to see the big picture."

SECTOR ORGANIZATION

The Sector organizational construct focuses the coordinated efforts of all assigned operational capabilities. It recognizes that, in a broad sense, all operational activities focus on prevention of an incident or illegal event, or on response to an emergency where prompt action mitigates loss of life or property, or adverse environmental impact. The command and control processes the Coast Guard uses to execute those two operational business areas are interrelated, but sufficiently distinct that they can be managed as two separate but complementary departments: Prevention and Response.

The first focuses largely on gaining private sector compliance with regulatory standards and the design and maintenance of waterway systems to prevent incidents. The second concentrates on command and control activities associated with incident response and/or security enforcement.

Collins envisioned the relationship between Response and Prevention as one of collaborative interdependence. Boats, people and equipment are assigned based on where they conduct the majority of their work, with the understanding they may support the other department in certain situations. The result is a unity of effort across all departments and new focus on multi-mission operations. For example, intelligence regarding unlicensed operators carrying passengers may result in a combined safety (Prevention) and law enforcement (Response) boarding that may identify safety and documentation deficiencies as well as fisheries or other law enforcement violations.

In a typical Sector structure, the Prevention Department handles typical legacy MSO responsibilities and consists of three divisions:

- Inspections, which manages and oversees the regulatory and inspection aspects of the Coast Guard's safety, security and environmental protection responsibilities;
- Waterways Management, which controls aids to navigation, safety and security zones, regulated navigation areas, ice breaking, VTS and AIS;
- Investigations, which initiates inquiries into marine casualties, pollution, boating violations, and assessment of civil penalties.

The Response Department on the other hand, coordinates traditional Group responsibilities addressing search and rescue, pollution, and all hazards through its Incident Management Division, while the Enforcement Division enforces all laws and treaties and carries out security enforcement activities such as armed boardings, vessel escorts and security zone enforcement.

Making sure everyone has their needed supplies, gets paid and stays fit, the Logistics Department provides personnel, maintenance and engineering, medical and finance and supply support for the entire Sector.

While Logistics, Response and Prevention make up the bulk of the Sector organization, the two most critical components of Sector may be the Operational Planning and Force Readiness staff and the Sector Command Center.

"The success or failure of the Sector truly rests with the skills and abilities of the Logistics Department and planners," said Ferguson. " We're always going to do well with response and prevention. It's those support and planning elements that help us with the outreach and contingency planning that is really the backbone of our success or failure."

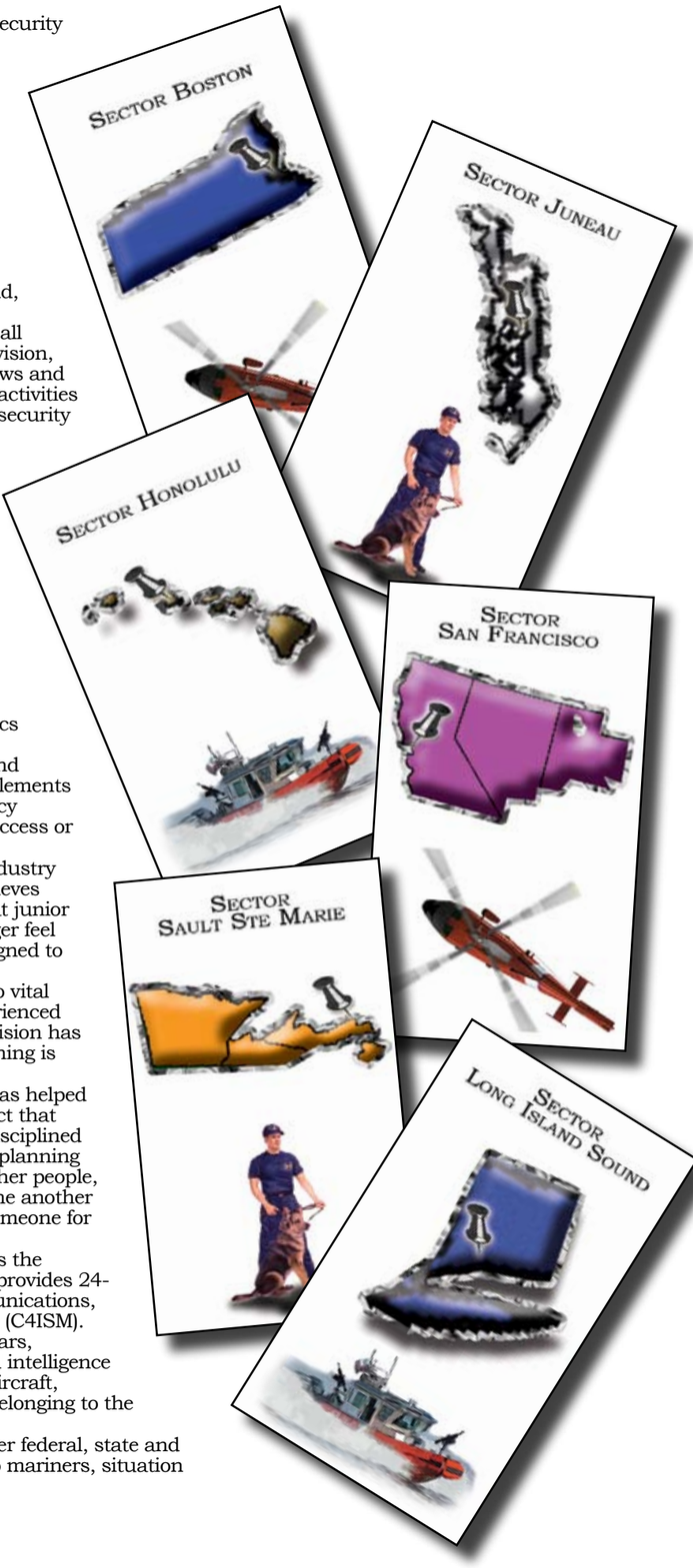
According to Kelley, planning is a growth industry for the Coast Guard. In the future, Kelley believes there will be a viable planning community that junior officers can grow into so that they will no longer feel they were given a "death sentence" when assigned to the planning office.

And Springer considers his planning staff so vital that he only trusts that responsibility to experienced staff members. "Everyone in my planning division has organizational Coast Guard experience. Planning is not a place for inexperienced people."

The work of contingency planning in itself has helped shift the operational focus of Sectors. "The fact that we are becoming less reactionary and more disciplined in our systems and approaches points to our planning processes," said Kelley. "When you engage other people, you're working with one another, you know one another and you don't have to worry about meeting someone for the first time in the heat of battle."

The Sector Command Center truly embodies the Commandant's goal of unity of command. It provides 24-hour command, control, coordination, communications, intelligence, sensor analysis, and data mining (C4ISM). The SCC is a Sector Commander's eyes and ears, displaying the current common operating and intelligence pictures, including knowledge of all vessels, aircraft, communications equipment, and personnel belonging to the Coast Guard and supporting agencies.

Furthermore, the SCC coordinates with other federal, state and local operations centers, and issues notices to mariners, situation



reports, and maritime alerts.

"We've got some of the best watchstanding that I've seen in my entire career," said Paskewich. "It's amazing what that watch is confronted with — marine safety activities, search and rescue as well as law enforcement. I think understanding the whole package makes for a better response to any of the missions we need to carry out."

Rounding out the Sector organization is the intelligence staff, who collects, evaluates, reports and disseminates operational intelligence. This staff serves as the primary intelligence support element and forwards its analysis of raw intelligence reports to the District and the Atlantic or Pacific Maritime Intelligence Fusion Center, and is the critical link between the Sector Commander and the entire Coast Guard intelligence enterprise.

STAFFING THE SECTOR

As Kelley alluded, the Sector model is a formula for enhanced leadership opportunities. "All the characteristics that go with good leadership will be what carries the day," he said.

A fact of the reorganization however, is that "command pin" opportunities will be in shorter supply. And while that may cause some personal angst for pending commanders, it shouldn't hamper leadership excellence. "It's not about the title of the job, it's about the level of responsibility," Springer said. "I would dare say that a Sector Chief of Prevention has more responsibility than some of the smaller MSOs. They may not have been Captain of the Port necessarily, but they have more people, more boardings, more inspections, etc. It's really not the title of what you do, it's what you do."

Kelley added, "There is a distinction between personal power and position power. Everyone's got his or her own degree of personal power. That's the thing we need to cultivate. I firmly believe people will follow you into the heat of battle based much more on personal power than positional power."

With this in mind, the Personnel Support Command has developed a officer's career guide that answers many of the questions posed by the field. One of the main concerns voiced was whether junior officers would be required to learn both traditional "M" and "O" type jobs. Now, while working in a Sector environment will expose personnel to different types of activities, officers will still be able to pursue their desired specialty.

Furthermore, according to the Sector Personnel FAQ provided by the Coast Guard Transformation Staff (CG-8T), officers with backgrounds in shore operations will initially get positions primarily in Response Departments. But the Sector organizational model will provide officers the opportunity to acquire additional competencies that will prepare them for eventual senior leadership positions.

"We're not going to create 'Sector JOs,'" said Springer "However, there is not way you can be in a Sector and not be aware of what's going on in other areas. They'll be focused on their primary job, but will have opportunities to learn the other program areas."

Springer and Ferguson both referred to the opportunities and responsibility to learn additional skills as a cross-pollination that is necessary for the future success of Sectors.

"My goal is that when my officers and enlisted leave here they are well rounded," Ferguson said. "A well-educated man or woman is a powerful weapon. If they spent their time in traditional search and rescue and then have an understanding of what it takes to do a good pollution response or marine casualty investigation they will be a great tool for the next Sector they go to."

ICS READY

The Coast Guard contributed significantly to the National Response Plan, released in December 2004. The NRP applies to all contingencies. The Coast Guard plays a lead role in maritime contingencies and a supporting role for others. In January 2005, the Commandant wrote, "The approach taken in the NRP is consistent with my decision to consolidate to Sectors." In the event of emergency, the Sector organization can quickly and easily shift to the Incident Command System.

No sooner had New Orleans been chartered as a Sector that they put this organizational construct to the ultimate test: Katrina.

"Being able to manage information through a single commander was absolutely key and essential to successfully understanding what was happening on-scene. It allowed us to gather information, pass it up the chain of command, identify where our gaps were and get the necessary resources to surge into the affected area," said Paskewich. "I think we did that a lot more cleanly as a Sector than we would have if the Sector did not exist."

"We're recognized in the field as the glue for most organizations to form up against," said Ferguson. Sectors offer the public one stop shopping when it comes to Coast Guard services.

Unity of command for maritime homeland security is essential to defeating maritime terrorism, and Sector commands are the vehicle for such unity.

A case in point is an actual event from Sector Buffalo last summer. A private plane crashed into Lake Erie. And according to Ferguson, because of the one command, the Coast Guard was able to use all the departments and facilitate a significant response to both the search and rescue phase and recovery phases and help the family through their loss. "This was a great example of how the Sector stepped up and the structure itself made it work," he said. CG

For more information on Sectors, including personnel FAQ and organizational information, visit the Transformation Staff (CG-8T) Web site at http://cgweb.comdt.uscg.mil/CG8/CG8T/home.htm.

Portions of this article first appeared in "Sector Commands," U.S. Coast Guard: The Shield of Freedom, 2005, Faircount LLC.

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CARIBBEAN ADVENTURE

STORY AND PHOTOS BY PA2 LISA HENNINGS, 1ST DIST.

BOAT OPS Coxwain BMC Matthew Welsh, guides the Escanaba's over the horizon small boat during counter-narcotics patrol in the Caribbean Sea.

Henry David Thoreau, a Massachusetts native and renowned philosopher, once said, "I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor."

Some people endeavor to bear gifts of perishable goods, clothing or money. Others endeavor to rescue those in peril, or bring an end to injustice. Crewmembers aboard the CGC Escanaba, a Boston-based ship, embody these altruistic qualities. Whether in port or underway, they consciously elevate themselves in seamanship, leadership, community outreach, maritime safety, law enforcement and rescue efforts.

Escanaba, outfitted with about 105 crewmembers and a Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron aviation detachment, recently sailed 10,980 nautical miles during a 64-day counter-narcotics patrol in the southern Caribbean from Feb. 17 to April 19. Escanaba, a 270-foot medium endurance cutter, made three port calls to Curacao, Grand Cayman and Cartagena, Colombia. Escanaba's crew donated time and money to a hospice in Curacao, responded to three search and rescue cases, interdicted nearly 4,700 pounds of cocaine, provided professional exchange with the Colombian Navy, and conducted 60 helicopter missions.

A KIND GESTURE: Cmdr. Michael S. Sabellico, Escanaba commanding officer, is a firm believer in serving something greater than one's self. Sabellico arranged a partnership with Wampatuck Elementary School located in Scituate, Mass. to donate $1,100, toys, clothing and gifts to Soto Siloam Christian Children's Hospice for terminally ill and orphaned children located in Curacao.

Escanaba then arranged with the U.S. Consulate for 17 shipmates to present the director of the Hospice with the gifts, paint the hospice and perform grounds maintenance once the cutter pulled into port.

"I was extremely proud to be part of the project and know the crew felt good being able to give something back for all the great things we have in our lives," said Sabellico, a father of two.

Although some of the kids at the hospice were too sick to greet the crew, the few who could interact were grateful for the gesture and excited about the visitors.

A LEARNING OPPORTUNITY: While in Cartagena, the crew had the opportunity to provide a professional exchange with the Colombian Navy. Crews from both countries discussed and practiced effective tactics for responding to shipboard emergencies, vessel boardings, and search and rescue planning. These continued joint professional exchanges promote security cooperation and coordinate partner nation initiatives to defeat the flow of illegal traffic.

THE COCAINE BUST: The day after leaving Grand Cayman, Escanaba boarding team members went aboard the motor vessel Dan Viking. After a 16-hour boarding, the team uncovered a secret compartment within the vessel that housed 104 bales of cocaine, equivalent to 5,732 pounds or 2.6 metric tons. Custody of the vessel, narcotics and suspected smugglers were transferred to the United States for possible prosecution.

SAVING GRACE: The Eighth Coast Guard District a distress call made via satellite phone March 28 from a married couple aboard the 32-foot sailing vessel Saving Grace taking on water in the vicinity of Little Corn Island, Nicaragua.

Escanaba changed course and made way to the Saving Grace's position. The Saving Grace was 50 miles away and her electrical pump eventually failed. Meanwhile, the Escanaba set flight quarters, the MH-68A Stingray helicopter launched, and the Over-The-Horizon small boat was deployed to assist.

The rescue and assistance team discovered several cracks above and below the waterline, provided repairs to the punctures and left a dewatering pump on board.

Once effective repairs were made, Saving Grace and her crew made their way to Isla De San Andreas, Colombia for repairs and the Coast Guard received a call stating that they had arrived safe.

"My officers and crew performed brilliantly and I couldn't be any more proud of them for their efforts," said Sabellico.

"We had success at every level with a significant drug seizure, a successful SAR case where we undoubtedly saved two lives, cooperative training with the Colombian Navy and a humbling volunteer opportunity in Curacao," he said. "Being away from family and loved ones is difficult enough, but to go the extra distance and accomplish what we did - that's special."

◀ **FINGER PAIN** MKC Julio C. Suazo demonstrates control techniques to members of the Colombian Navy in Cartagena, Colombia during law enforcement training.

Photo by PA1 Tasha Tully, PADET St. Petersburg

◀ **THE HAND OFF** GM3 Douglas Forgione stands guard over 104 bales of cocaine, worth an estimated $200 million, during a drug offload. The contraband was interdicted from a vessel off the coast of Honduras by the CGC Escanaba and then transferred to the CGC Spencer. Spencer then transferred the contraband to CGC Venturous April 7. The Venturous then transfered the drugs to shore.

The Bayou Bite

Photo by PA2 Susan Blake, USCGR

Heavy Load MK1 Andrew Steele, left, from ISC Alameda, and MSTC Nicholas Calise, from Sector Miami, examine a large shrimp boat that floated ashore near Station Venice, La. during Hurricane Katrina. So far, the Coast Guard has removed 597 vessels from commercially navigable waterways.

Wreck Removal and Recovery Group stays busy as wreckage dangers still lurk below Louisiana's waterways

Story by PA3 Robert Reed, 8th Dist.

The bayous, rivers and waterways of southern Louisiana have always been a dangerous, mysterious place filled with prowling alligators, slithering snakes and pestering bugs of all kinds. Since Hurricane Katrina came through, things have gotten a little more treacherous for the fishermen, shrimpers and boaters who travel through the dark, muddy waters, that are an integral part of the lifestyle and economy of the entire area.

While contending with obstacles has always been a part of navigating the waters here, the debris and sunken vessels tossed by the raging winds and waters of Katrina have made these waters an even greater hazard. It's the job of the Coast Guard's Wreck Removal and Recovery Group to remove them and make the waters safer once again.

"We've had numerous reports of [boat] strikes with underwater obstructions," said Cmdr. Charlie Rawson, the deputy incident commander of wreck removal and recovery operations. "We put them into our system and follow up on them as soon as possible for removal."

Coast Guard personnel, other federal agencies, parish or other local officials, and vessel owners also report sunken or displaced vessels.

Boats lining waterways, either pushed up on land or sunken below the waterline, are still a common sight down on the bayou. Those that can be have been spray-painted with a number so that their case can be tracked in an electronic database to see if they meet the necessary criteria for removal by the Coast Guard.

In Louisiana, the Federal Emergency Management Agency tasked the Coast Guard with removing wrecks and debris in or near commercially navigable waterways and channels. The criteria used for determining if wrecks and debris are eligible for removal is based on the Stafford Act. Before the Coast Guard can remove the debris, it must pose an immediate threat to life, public health and safety.

It's a big job. In more than a dozen Louisiana parishes, the Coast Guard has identified 713 vessels as fitting the criteria for removal. And there are 938 more potential cases that may or may not qualify for removal. Of these known and potential cases, 597 vessels have been removed using Stafford Act funds.

Initially, once a vessel was deemed eligible and ordered to be removed, the Vessel Removal and Recovery Operations incident commander tasked the Navy Supervisor of Salvage to conduct the removal operations. Navy SupSalv was given these initial jobs because it had the capability to remove large commercial fishing vessels. Coast Guard personnel provided both on-scene pre-removal and post-removal surveys, as well as oversight of the removal operations.

To meet the management needs of the incident command post for wreck and debris removal, Sector New Orleans continues to rely on reservists and temporary active duty members from across the United States.

"It's 11- to 12-hour days in the field," said MST2 Tom Landen, of Coast Guard Marine Safety Team, Elizabeth City, N.C. "You learn a lot though, and we get to help these guys out."

Currently, the removal operations involves numerous civilian contractors and local and state governments. Additionally, the Coast Guard is not the only federal government agency involved. The Wreck Removal and Recovery Group works closely with The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, FEMA, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality are all involved in the daunting task of cleaning up the region.

"We work together to operationally control the mission and keep a good idea of where we are going and what we need to focus on to meet the parishes' needs," said Rawson. "The challenges have been numerous. Identifying vessels and obstructions, and deciding the best and safest way to remove them."

"We continue to move forward as fast as we can," he added.

"I like to help them," Landen said about the situation. "I'm just glad I'm down here."

The bayous and waterways of southern Louisiana are unique places. Those who live there are unique people with a unique culture. With a little time, a little luck and a lot of hard work, the Coast Guard Wreck Removal and Recovery Group is hoping to help the livelihood and lifestyle of this one-of-a-kind locale thrive once again.

Photo by PA2 Mike Lutz, PADET New York

The Katrina Effect Contending with obstacles has always been a part of navigating the waters in Louisiana; however, the chaos caused by Hurricane Katrina, as shown here near Meraux, La., have made navigating the bayou an even greater hazard.

Deep Freeze

No time for trepidation as Polar Star sets sail for Antarctica on 48-hours notice

Breaking The Ice The CGC Polar Star breaks ice in the turning basin outside McMurdo Station, Antarctica, Feb. 15. The 134-person crew set sail for the South Pole after the Russian icebreaker Krasin broke a starboard propeller blade.

Take your pick ... the end of the earth, the middle of nowhere, the coldest, windiest, driest, emptiest and generally most nasty continent in the world.

A place where more solar radiation reaches the surface than is received at the Equator in an equivalent period, a place described as "mostly uninhabitable" by the Central Intelligence Agency's World Fact Book. However you look at it, this is Antarctica.

These facts didn't really seem to concern the crew of the bright red 399-foot Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star as they made preparations to get underway on the dreary and gray morning of Jan. 20. Maybe they didn't have time to consider what waited for them more than 8,000 miles away from their home at Pier 36 in Seattle. Perhaps with only 48-hours notice to get underway, the crew was more concerned about the food that needed to be stored, the ship's spaces that needed to be secured against heaving winter Pacific swells, and of course, their families to whom they would soon say goodbye.

For the past 50 years the U.S. Coast Guard has deployed ships in support of Operation Deep Freeze, the National Science Foundation's (NSF) U.S. Antarctic Program, which currently maintains the McMurdo Station facility and the Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station. The 30-year-old Polar Star, a Polar Class icebreaker, has deployed 15 times to break a channel through the unpredictable miles of ice that lie between the science community that inhabits the stations year-round, and the cargo and fuel ships they rely on to deliver more than six million gallons of fuel and four thousand metric tons of cargo they need to stay operational throughout the harsh winter months.

Story and photos by
PA2 Mariana O'Leary, PACAREA

Deep Freeze

This year, instead of using a U.S. icebreaker, the NSF chose instead to deploy the 323-foot Russian icebreaker Krasin. As the Krasin began the task of breaking through the ice, a combination of factors came into play, said Capt. Bruce Toney, who shifted command temporarily from the Polar Sea to the Polar Star for this deployment.

"First, the edge of the ice was over 70 miles from McMurdo, the second longest distance in many years and the inner channel, the last 15 miles, was a combination of multi-year rubble, creating a difficult situation for Krasin to complete an adequate channel. As time began to slip away, the Krasin broke a blade from their starboard propeller and lost a significant portion of their ice breaking capability. The blade did not appear to be easy to fix and the chance of a successful re-supply appeared in doubt so we were deployed to insure the re-supply was successful," said Toney.

Only 45-hours later, the Polar Star headed south.

"Our mission this year was to be in a standby status and to be ready to assist with the re-supply mission if necessary," said Lt. Cmdr. Jason Hamilton, the Polar Star operations officer.

"When the Krasin threw its blade, and it appeared that the re-supply was in jeopardy, we got underway to assist in whatever way we could."

You couldn't ask for better assistance, according to Toney. He explained why the Coast Guard's Polar Class cutters have the distinction of being the world's most powerful non-nuclear icebreakers.

"When you need sheer muscle and the hull form, the Polar Classes are your breakers of choice," said Toney. With a maximum of 77,000 shaft horsepower, the Polar Classes can break 6.5 feet of ice while continuously moving forward at three knots, or can back and ram ice up to 21-feet thick, said Toney. The Polar Class's cantilevered frames are spaced closely and the special one and three quarter inch thick high-tinseled steel hull is able to remain strong and flexible at extremely low temperatures.

The Polar Star's incredible power depends upon the highly skilled engineering department. They keep busy maintaining an 18,000 horsepower diesel electric plant for transit steaming and light ice breaking, and a 75,000 horsepower gas turbine plant for heavy ice breaking. The diesel electric plant consists of six large diesel engines, similar to locomotive engines, which generate electrical power that feed the three 6,000 horsepower DC motors, one on each of the three shafts. This kind of toughness is depended upon in the unpredictable Antarctic conditions.

"We have to be prepared for whatever we find down there," said Hamilton.

He explained that the traditional ice channel that the Polar Star breaks into McMurdo Station is 12 to 14 miles long. However, in recent years, a number of large icebergs that have broken off the ice shelf have blocked McMurdo Sound from the traditional currents and winds that help blow the ice out of the channel.

"We have had much longer ice edges. Last year, when we started the break in it was approximately 84 nautical miles, which was the longest in history," said Hamilton. "We modify our plans and work with what's presented. Although the crew only had 48-hours notice that we would be getting underway, the ship continuously plans and prepares for the trip to the ice, so we were ready for the call."

A typical trip to Antarctica for the Polar Star means approximately six months away from its homeport. Extensive damage control training is usually conducted en route to the ice, often in Honolulu or Sydney, which are frequent stops on the way south. Because the Polar Star operates independently, far from potential help from other vessels, the ship's crew has to be highly trained in damage control, and first aid in order to deal with any emergency they encounter.

On this trip, the need to be self-reliant was even more critical.

"Something that's been a major concern of mine on this trip is safety," said Toney. "Because of the route that we took, we were so far from help, and we had no helicopters, two unique things about this trip. Very fortunately we have not had anyone seriously hurt, but it's always a concern. Ships are an inherently dangerous place, and we do everything we can to minimize the chances of someone being injured. On some stretches of this trip we have been four or five days away from help," said Toney.

Lt. j.g. Robert Amrien, a physician's assistant, and Chief Petty Officer Herman Joling, the ship's permanent health services specialist, made up the medical staff in the Polar Star's sickbay.

"The crew of the Polar Star was well-screened for medical and dental problems before departing," said Amrien, "but the crew are still subject to many illnesses and, of course, with the shipboard environment subject, to much higher incidence of injury."

The medical staff is prepared and experienced, but is hindered by the lack of an X-ray and lab equipment normally found in a shore-side clinic, said Amrien.

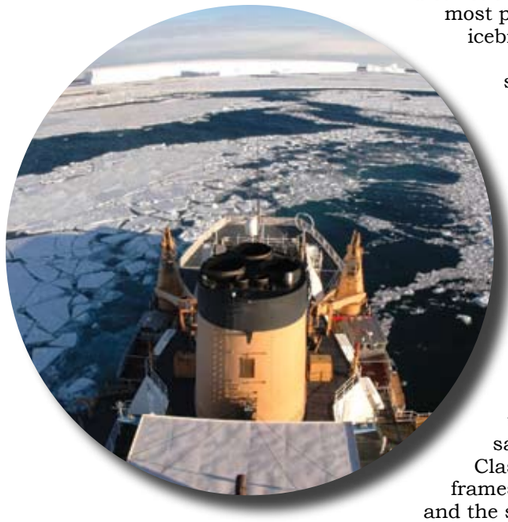
As the crew headed south, they stuck strictly to an exhaustive schedule of damage control drills through the hot tropic sun, and later the rough seas of the southern ocean. Their goal was to be constantly ready for any emergency. The crew lived and worked with the challenges of maintaining the unique and aging systems of a 30-year-old ship.

"I think the primary obstacles were the uncertainty of the mission before we started and then once we were underway the engineering challenges we faced due to the aging plant," said Toney.

"We dealt with the uncertainty by fully assuming we were going to go, and made sure we were totally prepared or had short notice executable plans if we did get called. The engineering challenges were dealt with by the dedication, work ethic and knowledge gained on prior deployments by our key engineering personnel. For many of our key engineers this was their second or third Deep Freeze mission. We faced almost daily challenges and many times key personnel worked for more than 24 hours straight to trouble shoot and repair equipment. The end result was our faster than expected transit and our ability to begin breaking heavy ice once we arrived in the Ross Sea," said Toney.

On Feb. 13, the Polar Star entered the ice in Antarctica.

"We really never knew what to expect once we deployed," said Toney. "As we saw the situation



Trail Blazer CGC Polar Star breaks the ice at the mouth of McMurdo Station, Antarctica, Feb. 13. The 399-foot polar class icebreaker spent more than two months travelling to the world's southern tip to break a channel through the miles of ice that lie between the science community that inhabits the station and the cargo ships they rely upon for supplies.

While Underway To Antarctica (Clockwise from top) BM2 Pamela-Renae Rollins uses a sextant to check the Polar Star's position; Seaman Apprentice Elijah Webb secures mooring lines; MST2 Christopher Wallin collects and treats samples of sea water from the South Pacific; MK3 Betty Brown greets Lt. j.g. James Miller with a pie in the face during a Morale event; MST3 William Staneart checks the seal of his mask during a fire drill.

unfold we initially assumed we would arrive and have a very difficult time completing the channel and escorting both ships, later as it became apparent that the mission was being completed, it appeared that we might not even enter the ice. As we got closer we were a very good insurance policy that the mission would succeed. Once in the ice we were able to complete a short escort of the tanker, groom the channel, scallop some of the outer fast ice, groom the turning basin and widen the lower channel for use as an ice runway."

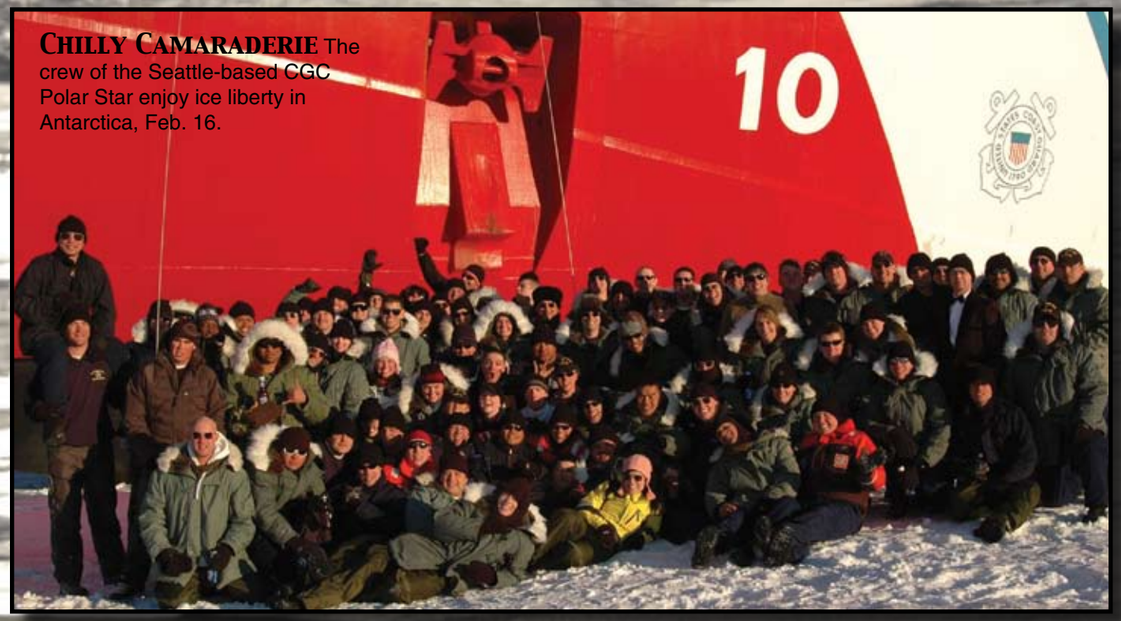
Although limited, the Polar Star's time in the ice allowed numerous crewmembers to receive training on driving the ship in varying ice conditions and operating the machinery during heavy ice breaking, skills which will carry over into future operations as the Coast Guard maintains its expertise in heavy ice breaking, said Toney. As the Polar Star shifted missions and began grooming the narrow ice channel, a call for assistance came in from the U.S. Naval Ship Lawrence H. Gianella. The fuel ship was pulled up onto the ice in the channel, and unable to maneuver its way back to open water. The Polar Star, happy to be in the right place at the right time, broke through the ice surrounding the Gianella, enabling the ship to be on its way.

The Polar Star spent a busy week within the ice of the Antarctic. After breaking out the Gianella and widening the channel for future ice breaking missions, the Polar Star set to the task of creating an ice runway at the lower end of channel for C-130 airplane re-supply flights.

"I think the biggest thing we gave people during this mission was a sense that the cavalry was there in case of need," said Hamilton. "We were ready within 45 hours, even though we were given 48. We got our entire crew together, headed south in the quickest time possible, and got to do a little ice breaking to top it off," said Hamilton.

"I think you saw an excellent example of devotion to duty in this year's Deep Freeze," said Toney. "They all worked a tremendous amount of hours to get the ship ready and conduct training and they still have high morale and a good sense of accomplishment. I couldn't be more proud of this crew and am very fortunate to have had the opportunity to sail with them," said Toney.

Wintry Watch An unknown sentry from the CGC Polar Star stands watch looking out over Antarctica which is known as "generally the most nasty continent in the world."



Chilly Camaraderie The crew of the Seattle-based CGC Polar Star enjoy ice liberty in Antarctica, Feb. 16.

Photo
courtesy U.S.
Fish & Wildlife Service

THIS FLYING IS FOR THE BIRDS

Story by PA1 Alan Haraf, 11th Dist.

Located a mile off the coast of Crescent City in northern California, a small rock formation serves as ocean-front property for tens of thousands of fine-feathered friends. Castle Rock National Wildlife Refuge is the second largest seabird nesting colony in California, and one of the largest south of Alaska.

Tufted Puffins, Rhinoceros Auklets, Fork-Tailed Petrels and Murres are among 12 different species occupying the 14-acre island. Each April, more than 80,000 Murres alone can occupy the cliffs, nesting and watching over their new-born chicks. The other birds burrow their dwellings, some up to six-feet long, into the soft, fragile ground. So soft, in fact, that any human activity on the surface can easily crush portions of the colony.

The area is no secret to bird watchers, biologists, and representatives from area refuges.

Eric Nelson of the Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge and manager of Castle Rock, and Dr. Richard Golightly, professor of wildlife at Humboldt State University, wondered how they could better study the abundance and health of these animals without endangering the habitat, knowing that the area can not be easily reached by boat. Rocks and heavy surf make it nearly impossible to land any type of watercraft.

"We collectively came up with the idea of installing high tech, remote-controlled cameras on the cliff with the intent of transmitting real time video back to us on land," said Nelson. "But this project required transporting our equipment to the cliff by air, and by highly-trained, highly-skilled professionals."

Remote technology, they hoped, would give them a birds-eye view from miles away. And, that's where the Coast Guard came in.

Last November, Nelson and Golightly contacted Air Station Humboldt Bay about utilizing an HH-65 helicopter to land a team of biologists and their equipment on Castle Rock. After thorough and careful planning, a multi-agency project nicknamed "Burrow Nesting Nocturnal Seabird" was in place.

This mission was far from routine, however. Finding an area to land a 6,000 pound helicopter, away from the flat, soft grounds used for nesting, was no easy task.

"We were able to locate a very small, rocky area near a ledge during a reconnaissance flight last November," said Lt. Ryan Siewert, one of the pilots assigned to the project, which took place, Feb. 23.

Because of the rocky terrain and angle of the slope, precise coordination and communication between pilots and flight mechanic were critical to a safe landing.

"We would hover over the landing zone and steady the helicopter against turbulence," explained Siewert. "While AMT2 Jim Zebal provided precise conning directions to ensure the landing gear was clear of large rocks and over a flat surface, we set the helicopter down very gently to ensure we were, indeed, on flat ground."

HH-65 landing restrictions require a slope be no more than 10-degrees in either direction to ensure the helicopter doesn't roll over.

"We practice rock area landings and pinnacle landings during our routine training missions," explained Lt. Stephen Baxter, a second pilot from Air Station Humboldt Bay assigned to project. "But rarely do we do both at the same time. It was even more challenging because of the rough terrain."

Birds were also a challenge, although most had vacated the cliff during an initial low pass by the helicopter.

"The threat of a bird strike was very real," cautioned Siewert. "I've never seen so many birds in one place before. Had we hit one bird, the mission could have been scrapped."

Siewert outlined what could have happened if a bird strike occurred.

"Had we encountered one, we may have had to shut down on the rock to examine the helicopter for damage. The focus of the mission would have shifted from the transport of the biologists to our own rescue. We did not want to see that happen."

As it was, the crew from Air Station Humboldt Bay, which also included Lt. Kevin Winters, successfully transported a team of five people and their equipment weighing approximately 400 pounds to and from Castle Rock in seven separate trips. The equipment consists of two robotic cameras, Global Positioning Satellite units, solar panels, and transmitters. The team spent almost six hours setting up and securing the equipment.

"The cameras, one of which has thermal imaging, will transmit video of nesting activities in different burrows," said Golightly. "Meanwhile, the GPS units will be used to plot burrow locations in reference to various rock formations identified on video."

"With our equipment on the cliff, we can now study activities such as productivity, nesting behaviors, incubation, and population," said Professor Golightly. "The numbers, or lack thereof, can also tell us a great deal about ocean conditions, food availability in the ocean, and marine pollution."

Video will also be transmitted to the National Parks Service Visitor Center in Crescent City where visitors can view real time video of activity on the cliff. In addition, Humboldt State University has set up a website for viewers through www.humboldt.edu.

Air Station Humboldt Bay continues to be an integral partner among other federal agencies and state educational institutions regarding conservation science at Castle Rock. This project demonstrates a shared interest in important marine resources and is one that is definitely … for the birds.

SCIENTIFIC SUPPORT Members of the National Wildlife Refuge and Humboldt State University wait as an HH-65 helicopter from Air Station Humboldt Bay prepares to take off after transporting personnel and high tech video cameras onto Castle Rock National Wildlife Refuge in northern California. The equipment will be used to study various species of birds which nest on the remote island. The Coast Guard is an integral partner on the "Burrow Nesting Nocturnal Seabird" project, which demonstrates a shared interest in important marine resources.

TTC takes aim at the changing challenge of maritime protection

Story and photos by PA2 Erica Taylor, USCG Special Missions Training Center

A product of the post Sept. 11 world, Maritime Safety and Security Teams were commissioned to aid the Coast Guard's homeland security mission. Trained in the most up-to-date techniques in port and waterways security, MSSTs provided a quick and fresh platform for the nation's changing maritime security needs. However, in an ever-changing and continuously-advancing security arena, how does a new program withstand the rigors of real-world application? The answer lies in real-world training.

The CG Special Missions Training Center offers advanced tactical courses that focus on current security trends. Located at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., SMTC specializes in providing relevant training.

Little Room To Maneuver

A member of MSST Boston hones his close quarters combat skills during the five-week Tactical Training Course at the Coast Guard Special Missions Training Center located at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

The TTC is a five-week program that expands upon an MSSTs initial stand-up training. It enhances marksmanship, hones close-quarters combat skills, strengthens military aptitude, and helps MSSTs get closer to their optimal preparedness level.

"The goal at the conclusion of the training is to make maritime law enforcement teams more capable in their Homeland Security mission and daily operations" said Frank Browski, TTC senior instructor. Having spent 24 years in the U.S. Army Special Forces, he is aware of the need for current, viable training for the MSSTs. "The training we offer is effective for boarding non-compliant vessels and for entering buildings while shoreside. This training probably should have been given a long time ago, but we live in a different world and teams are more vulnerable than ever."

"This training has been a long time coming," said BMCS Stephen McDonald, a member of MSST Boston. After graduating the course on Aug. 12, McDonald says that tactical and close quarters combat training is critical to his unit's force protection mission. "People have been in close quarters situations with minimal training in the past, so we are happy to receive it. Hiring experts to teach the course is an important step toward making MSSTs operationally sound, but I know that this training is just one piece of the puzzle."

"This training is another step in achieving full operational capabilities for the MSSTs," said Capt. E. L. Alexander, commanding officer of SMTC.

Instructors face different challenges with each new group as they isolate weaknesses and improve team cohesion. Using a building block approach, the first two weeks strengthen fundamental pistol and rifle shooting skills.

"When the teams get here they are already marksmen," said Browski. "We are refining their skills from a basic level and giving them more advanced skill sets."

> "The training enhances the unit's ability to perform operations under anti-terrorism and counter terrorism scenarios and situations. It allows the unit to take offensive and defensive measures securely and safely."
>
> – Frank Browski, TTC senior instructor

Week three mixes a series of movement drills into their marksmanship routine to include turning drills, vertical and lateral movement, barriers and percentage targets.

Weeks four and five build on the students burgeoning skill sets, introducing ground movement and close quarters combat. Teams start with two-man teams and work up to four-man teams. They learn to function as a team in a single room and then in a multi-room space.

"We start the students out with buildings and bigger rooms," said Browski. "We eventually go to close quarters, like what you would find on a ship. Later we add stairwells and hallways, which are considered high-danger areas."

Culminating in a two-day, final stand-up drill, week five pushes the teams to the limits as instructors test their overall knowledge, their ability to endure fatigue and their ability to work as a single unit.

"Students need to be able to react if a situation deteriorates," said Browski. "At the end of the training day, they know they can handle this type of work. Students also learn a lot about each other and how they function as a team."

Team unity is also vital to mission accomplishment. The rigorous tactical training that they learn enhances their ability to act as a cohesive unit and to provide rapid, well-choreographed and effective response.

"Togetherness is critical because boardings can last days and no personal issues can be present between members during boardings. Such problems would make our job difficult and dangerous," said McDonald.

"The training enhances the unit's ability to perform operations under anti-terrorism and counter-terrorism scenarios and situations," said Browski. "It allows the unit to take offensive or defensive measures securely and safely. This course is not a leadership course, but we put people of all grades into leadership roles; it's a real confidence builder."

Teams are eager, confident, and ready for the assignment ahead of them. "With the proper support, doctrine, equipment, and visionary leadership, MSSTs will become an essential part of our maritime security posture," said Capt. Alexander.

Ball Players Score Elite Athletes of the Year Titles

The 2005 Coast Guard Elite Athletes of Year have several things in common. Both of their sports use round balls. Both use nets, although one shoots the ball through a net, while the other smashes it over. Both are new to their officer careers and both have excelled as participants on All-Navy teams.

In an award ceremony held at Coast Guard Headquarters March 23, Adm. Thomas Collins presented the Female Elite Athlete of the Year to volleyball player Lt. j.g. Catherine Johann, Naval Air Station Pensacola, and the Male Elite Athlete of the Year to basketball standout Lt. j.g. Micah Bonner, Sector Mobile.

HOLDING COURT Lt. j.g. Micah Bonner, above, and Lt. j.g. Catharine Johann are Coast Guard 2005 Elite Athletes of the Year.

Johann was the starting outside hitter for the 2005 All-Navy women's volleyball team that won the Armed Services Women's Volleyball Tournament at Fort Carson, Col.

Her outstanding play earned her a selection as the only Coast Guard member of the All-Armed Forces Team, where she helped the combined services team to a first place finish at the U.S. National Volleyball Championships, and was named to the U.S. Nationals All-Star Team.

Additionally, Johann volunteered for the Easter Seals campaign, and helped elementary school teachers with summer reading programs.

"It's an exciting, neat honor to win," said Johann, who still holds the Coast Guard Academy career kill record with 1,747. "I'm just so grateful to the people I work with who were gracious to let me play."

As a starting point guard on the All-Navy basketball team, Bonner led the Navy to its first gold medal since 1996 in the 2005 Armed Forces Men's Basketball Championship.

Then, as part of the All-Armed Forces basketball team, he travelled to Mons, Belgium, to help guide the United States team to a third place finish in an international field of teams in the 42nd Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe Basketball Tournament.

Bonner gives back to the community by driving three hours to Tuscaloosa, Ala., to speak to underprivileged children.

"It feels really good to win," said Bonner, a former Division III College All-American at Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, "I'm thankful for the opportunity to participate. It was an awesome feeling."

Story by Gary Scheer, Coast Guard MWR

Photo by AMT1 Sam Loeka, Air Station Los Angeles

PASSING BY The CGC Narwhal and a Station Los Angeles small boat enforce a security zone around the Queen Mary 2.

Meeting of the Queens

Sector Los Angeles/Long Beach coordinated the maritime safety and security of the first ever "meeting of the Queens" in the Port of Long Beach, Calif., Feb. 23.

The Queen Mary 2, the world's largest luxury liner, saluted its predecessor, the Queen Mary with three long blasts of its whistle in a ceremony witnessed by a flotilla of more than 800 vessels.

It was the responsibility of Sector Los Angeles/Long Beach to maintain a viable security zone, while allowing thousands of spectators the opportunity to witness history.

Coast Guard units involved were the CGC Narwhal, Station Los Angeles, MSST 91103, and Air Station Los Angeles. In addition to the Coast Guard units, multiple local agencies aided in the security detail.

According to Lt. Nicole Rodriguez, the event project officer, the entire operation went off without a hitch. "Our unified command with local agencies performed exceptionally well. Despite the high number of pleasure craft in the water and helicopters overhead, we feel the event was safely enjoyed by all," she said.

Story by Lt. j.g. Anthony Migliorini, Sector Los Angeles/Long Beach

FCW "Federal 100" for 2005

Coast Guard Lieutenant helped create a system to track Hurricane Katrina missing-person reports

Story by Aliya Sternstein, Federal Computer Week

Photo by Stan Barouh

ONE IN 100 Lt. Joe Morgan, was honored by *Federal Computer Week* magazine for his role in Homeport, the missing- and stranded-persons reporting system used during Hurricane Katrina.

The Coast Guard usually has no problem handling reports on missing people. But then, the agency has never encountered a crisis on the scale of Hurricane Katrina. Not only was a new system needed, but it was needed quickly.

Lt. Joe Morgan accepted the quick-turnaround assignment, working through the night Aug. 31 in the U.S. Coast Guard's West Virginia Operations Systems Center, where he is a Web services project officer.

Supported by a three-person team, Morgan adapted a Coast Guard portal application, called Homeport, into a missing- and stranded-persons reporting system.

The portal is a secure Web site for sharing port security information among government agencies and companies.

Homeport acted as a life preserver. It received 16,081 reports of Katrina victims needing to be rescued. In the end, the Coast Guard was credited with rescuing 33,545 people.

Morgan's involvement in the Katrina relief effort began when the Coast Guard Command Center requested an online tool to handle the surge of missing-person reports coming in. The Coast Guard could not keep up by passing faxes and phone messages back and forth.

Morgan solved that problem by allowing family and friends to submit forms via the Web and then importing that information into a database. Authorized Coast Guard employees continuously updated the status of each case as active, found or still missing.

Loved ones were kept informed with phone calls or e-mail messages. As the Coast Guard's efforts merged with those of the American Red Cross, Morgan configured the reporting system to export information to a Red Cross database.

The volume of missing-person reports, which numbered in the thousands, did not shake Morgan, who is accustomed to data overload. But details in those reports - a missing grandmother or a person living alone with a dog - touched him. "Anything we could do to help with the missing-person recovery effort was very satisfying," he said.

Morgan and his team were dedicated to dealing with the immediate crisis caused by Hurricane Katrina. But they were also thinking ahead to the next emergency, said Lt. Cmdr. Ron Riedinger, assistant division chief of Operations IV at the center. With Hurricane Rita arriving a few weeks later, he said, "they were prepared to use the same system, with some improvements."

Originally published on Mar. 20, 2006; Reprinted with permission.

NOT TO SCALE Friends and relatives of Lousiana-native BM1 Christopher Deblieux, ANT South Portland, show their appreciation for what the Coast Guard did in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina by decorating their Krew of Wrecks entry to resemble a roof rescue scene. The 20th annual Mardis Gras-style boat parade was held Feb. 25 on the Tickfaw River in Springfield La.

Coast Guard wins 2006 Hawaiian military Surfing Championship

Coast Guard surfers dominated the 2006 Hawaii Armed Services Athletic Council Surfing Championship held off Pyramid Rock on the Marine Corps Base in Kaneohe, Hawaii, Feb. 12. The 16-surfer Coast Guard team took home the top prize for the second time in the event's three year history.

Seventy of the island's best military surfers competed in "Hawaii scale" 2-to-4-foot waves. According to team captain YN2 Johnnie Dodge, who took second place in the Masters Long Board competition, the women surfers enjoyed near- perfect, glassy conditions. Conditions deteriorated for the men, however, when an afternoon rain squall nearly ended the event. Once the storm passed, the waves grew bigger and a heavy onshore wind turned the "perfect" morning into a mixing bowl of waves and sea spray. But that didn't hinder the Coast Guard team who turned in an impressive victory, beating the second place Marine Corps team 86 - 35.

Top individual men's honors went to AST3 Kris Grimm, Air Station Barbers Point, in the Open Short Board category; BM1 Ekahi Lee, MSST Honolulu, for Open Long Board and Open Body Board; BM2 Justin Acosta, ATG Pearl Harbor, for Seniors Short Board; BM3 Kupe Rosser, CGC Walnut, for Seniors Long Board; and SKCS Wayne Garcia, 14th District, for Masters Short Board.

Other individual results included a third place by Lee in Open Short Board; a second place by Rosser in Open Long Board; a third place by BM1 Billy Hoffman, MSST Honolulu in Senior Long Board; a second place finish by BM1 Steven Mosk, MSST Honolulu, in Masters Short Board; a second place by Dodge in Masters Long Board; and a second place by AMT2 Winston Han, Air Station Barbers Point, in Open Body Board.

Coast Guard women also took home prizes with Ensign Gina Krueger, CGC Jarvis, taking home a second place finish in Women Long Board and a fifth place showing in the Women Short Board. ET1 Gina Ho-Waller, ESU Honolulu, took third place in Women Short Board; and BM2 Tiffany Peltier, MSST Honolulu, finished third in Women Long Board and fourth in Women Short Board.

— Provided by YN2 Johnnie Dodge and Lt. Darren Melanson, both of MSST Honolulu

Photo provided by Lt. Darren Melanson, MSST Honolulu

SURFING SUPREMACY Coast Guard surfers win several individual honors as well as the overall HASAC Surfing Championship held off Pyramid Rock on the Marine Corps Base in Kaneohe, Hawaii. (From left to right, back row) BM2 Tiffany Peltier, PS2 Glenn Park, Ensign Gina Kreuger, BM1 Steven Mosk, BM3 Kupe Rosser and BM2 Justin Acosta. (Front row) SKCS Wayne Garcia, YN2 Johnnie Dodge, BM1 Ekahi Lee and AST3 Kris Grimm.

OFFICIAL VISIT Department of Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff greets Lt. Richard Kavanaugh and Lt. Cmdr. Scott Kim (center), both of Coast Guard Activities Far East, upon his arrival at Yokota Air Base, Japan March 26. Secretary Chertoff flew to Japan aboard Coast Guard One for a visit to several Asian nations.

Photo by Auxiliarist Steven Herman, Coast Guard Activities Far East

Reunions

U.S.S. Lowndes

Aug. 17 - 20
Seattle, Wa.

Contact

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Kingdom of Bahrain

Patrol Forces Southwest Asia

Coast Guard Patrol Forces South West Asia (PATFOR SWA) is located in the Kingdom of Bahrain. This is an island just of the coast of Saudi Arabia in the Persian Gulf.

PATFOR SWA was initially set up as a contingency operation with four cutters. As operations grew, so did PATFOR SWA. PATFOR SWA is now a tenant command at Navy Support Activity Bahrain with six Coast Guard cutters in theater.

Bahrain, is approximately 7,500 miles from the United States and is considered the most "Westernized" country in the region. NSA offers all the amenities you would expect from a large naval base. In addition to NSA, the Kingdom of Bahrain has much to offer — from incredible resorts that offer sailing and scuba diving, to great shopping, to quality restaurants providing local and American cuisine.

Currently, there are 220 personnel assigned to PATFOR SWA which includes personnel attached to the CGCs Adak, Aquiqneck, Baranof, Maui, Monomoy and Wrangell.

Operating in conjunction with the U.S. Navy and other coalition forces in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom and Maritime Security Operations, PATFOR SWA works diligently to protect assets that are critical to Iraq's future including the protection of offshore oil platforms. Other aspects of the mission include the regulation of shipping and arms smuggling and working with and training local nations.

Working at PATFOR SWA is challenging. Typical work days last 11 hours and you are expected to stand Force Protection Watches and may even be deployed to the Forward Operating Base in Kuwait. Members are required to attend four to seven weeks of Pre-Deployment Training at ISC Portsmouth, Va. Normal tour length is one year, unaccompanied. Upon successful tour completion, afloat personnel receive priority one assignment preference with shore side personnel receiving priority two. Additional benefits include FSA-R, Imminent Danger Pay, Tax Exclusion, 30-days of compensatory leave and other entitlements afforded military personnel in this region.

Should you decide to volunteer and accept this challenging assignment, you will embark on a journey that only a few will ever experience.

Story by Lt. j.g. Mark Lucas and CWO Sam Vigo

FLAG PRESENTATION Members from Patrol Forces Southwest Asia present Atlantic Area Commander Vice Adm. Vivien Crea, with a Command Task Group 55.6 pennant during her visit to the Bahrainian-based unit, Feb. 7, 2006.

Housing: Government-leased housing is provided. There are two, three and five bedroom units with pools.

Facilities: Navy Support Activity (NSA Bahrain) has everything a any Navy unit in the states may have including, a Navy Federal Credit Union, exchange, medical facilities, gym, and movie theater.

Weather: The temperatures in Bahrain can be severe. In the summer, daytime temperatures are between 118 and 137 degrees with nighttime temperatures in the low 100s. In winter, you can expect daytime temperatures between 82 and 96 degrees with nighttime temps dropping into the mid 60s.

Education: NSA Bahrain offers traditional classroom courses as well as Independent Study. CLEP & DANTES tests are also available.

On Guard

3rd Class Cadet Laura Williams practices a series of karate forms Jan. 18, during a martial arts demonstration at the Coast Guard Academy in New London, Conn.

Photo by PA2 Luke Pinneo, 1st Dist.